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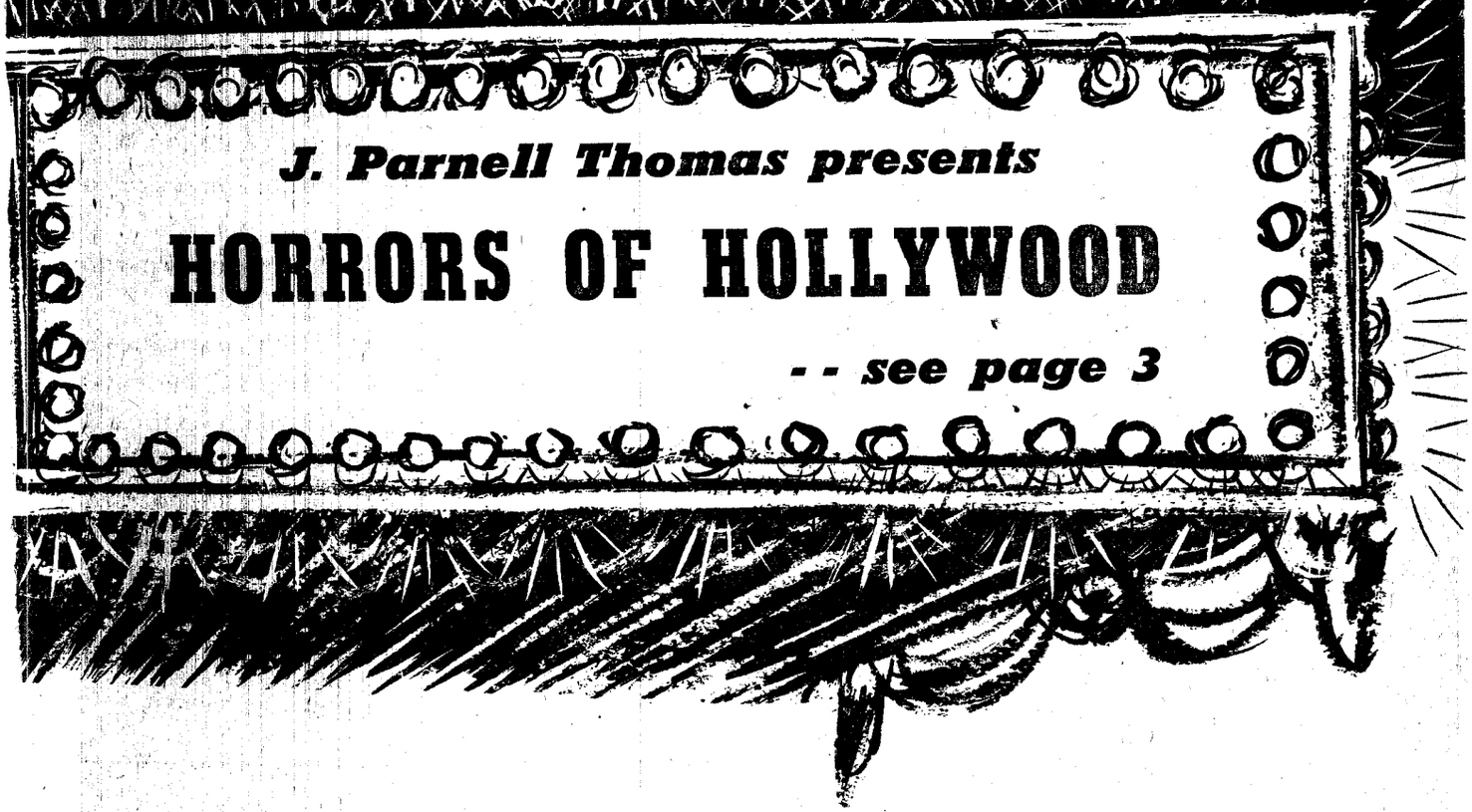

J. Parnell Thomas presents

HORRORS OF HOLLYWOOD

-- see page 3

THIRD PARTY IN '48?

by A. B. MAGIL

REMEMBER THIS DAY!

by HOWARD FAST

FIVE CARTOONS FROM ANTI-FASCIST CHINA

JUNE 3, 1947

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THE THOUGHT-POLICE ARE PROWLING...

HAVE you a son or daughter in college? Suppose he or she rose in class one of these days to question the Truman Doctrine? Or to say Franco is a fascist? Or that propping up the King of Greece to murder democrats is criminal policy? Or to say that organized labor has hallowed rights that Taft and Hartley are conspiring to destroy, or that the Communists have rights guaranteed by the Constitution? And suppose your son or daughter were hounded from the University, classified as subversive, blacklisted from professional posts—or even sent to jail? We know how you would feel.

Well, a conspiracy to establish such policing on the American campus has been uncovered. Your son or daughter may find it impossible to ask the questions any honest, intelligent student should. And honest professors may find it impossible to permit such thinking—on pain of expulsion themselves. You know what has happened at Queens, at Wayne, at the University of Wisconsin.

NEW MASSES believes that public outcry from coast to coast is demanded on this issue today. That is why we are publishing a series of articles by Joseph North, who has just returned from touring a dozen universities. We have embarked on an unremitting campaign to help save campus freedom.

We know of no other magazine crusading on this issue.

We know too many other magazines would welcome thought-police for the student.

Therefore, we urge that you help the staunchest champion of the students' interests, of the interests of all who believe in democracy.

The thought-police are prowling the campu today, now.

Will you do someth g about it?

THE EDITORS.

(Fill out coupon on page 31.)

new masses

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VOLUME LXIII, NUMBER 10

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NOW SHOWING! **SUPER-COLOSSAL!**

J. Parnell Thomas presents

SONG OF HOLLYWOOD

Co-starring Robert Taylor (They Made Me a Red) and Adolphe Menjou (Millionaires Are Marxist) and a big cast of characters.

By N. A. DANIELS

Hollywood.

"THE place of inanity in our national life," Robert Forsythe once wrote, "lacks proper statistical foundation. It is generally agreed that we rank well among the nations of the world in this respect . . ." And I'm sure Mr. Forsythe would have found much data in our latest un-American witch-hunt. That is one valid way of looking at a thing—consider its comedy angles.

The cast of characters: J. Parnell Thomas (nee Feeney), Robert Taylor and Adolphe Menjou. Mr. Thomas held his hearings behind closed doors in the Biltmore Hotel. There were no witnesses; no newspaper men. Regularly after the day's work was over he popped out to tell the impatient press that the day's revelations had startled him, horrified him, shocked him.

Sorry, he couldn't say what they were, but they were amazing. Have to be looked into further. Yes, he had had Hanns Eisler in for questioning, but Mr. Eisler had been uncooperative, evasive and confusing. He would haul him to Washington in June. Eisler's attorney, Ben Margolis, commented drily that Mr. Thomas, unable to extract any sinister information from Hanns Eisler, who, Mr. Thomas had announced from Washington, had "even closer ties to Moscow than his brother," would naturally feel he was evasive. But Mr. Thomas still insists that there is much Mr. Eisler can "reveal," and by God and by Rankin he is going to be made to reveal whatever it is.

Robert Taylor, the MGM clothes-horse, was star for a day. He "revealed" that his commission in the Navy had been "held up" by "Washington" while it despatched a special "agent" to force the reluctant Mr. Taylor to appear in a pro-Communist film, *Song of Russia*. Mr. Lowell Mellett (the "agent") promptly remarked from Washington that the accusation was too silly to deny. But the portrait of Robert Taylor as a flaming patriot who was dying to get into service and was forced by FDR to act in a film mildly favorable to our ally, the Soviet Union, made banner headlines — and Mr. Mellett's denial rated a stick of type.

Adolphe Menjou, the lesser clothes-horse, was easily the top-billed attraction. He has lately been making a reputation (for inanity) by horrifying a group of well-stuffed middle-aged Beverly Hills matrons by shrill cries of "The Reds are coming!" A great crusader, Mr. Menjou qualified himself as an "expert" on Russia by virtue of having read 350 books and having once "spent a year in Europe" where he "talked to a lot of Russians." He practically burst at the seams in his zeal to expose the Kremlin's yen to infiltrate the motion picture industry, and was baffled by only one peculiar tactic of the wily Marxists. He confessed wistfully that he could not understand why "so many millionaires" supported communism. This, apparently, was beyond his *expertise*.

A FEW other professional anti-Red hacks brought up the rear of this magnificent combined operation: the doddering Rupert Hughes said Hollywood was "rotten" with Communists; a producer at MGM named James K. McGuinness echoed Mr. Hughes out of one side of his mouth (he is a casting-agent's dream of a genteel gangster); a third-rate screenwriter and film critic (for *Esquire*) named Jack Moffitt, who looks exactly like Porky Pig with a mustache, "gave us some great stuff," said Mr. Thomas, and "really loaded the record," though what he could have revealed nobody knows but Mr. Thomas and he won't tell.

Then there was "Colonel" Jack L. Warner, still suffering a guilty conscience for having produced *Mission to Moscow*, who arrived twenty min-

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utes late with his 250-pound Gestapo chief, Blaney Matthews, and gave secret testimony. It is common knowledge here that the cellophane colonel has been collecting and circulating a blacklist since the 1945 film strike, which he decided was inspired by an ungrateful Moscow and which he tried desperately to break by changing his company's slogan to: Combining Good Citizenship With Tear-Gas.

But the prize gem of this paste collection was Mrs. Lela Rogers, the puppet-master of her daughter's career, who told the committee that there was a line in *Tender Comrade* which Ginger properly refused to speak. As near as she could recall, it ran: "Share and share alike—that's democracy!" Trembling with righteous wrath Mrs. Rogers shouted: "I consider that outright Communist propaganda!" She also said there existed in Hollywood a "little Red School House" where writers were trained to insert Red ideas into films. She did not say how frantically RKO had bid for the story *Tender Comrade* at the insistence of her daughter, nor how much had been paid for it (plenty), nor how much her marionette-daughter had made on it with her percentage deal (more plenty), nor how she had begged its author, after the film was released, to write another story for her darling.

The "little Red School House," of course, is the People's Educational Center, and Mr. Thomas somehow managed during the ten days he was in town to "examine" the immigration procedure at such border towns as Tia Juana, where he discovered that it was very lax, which made it possible for "Russian Marxist teachers" to slip into the country in order to help indoctrinate writers at the PEC. Something will have to be done about this, said Mr. Thomas.

Added attraction to this super-spectacle was the "unexpected" appearance of Victor Kravchenko, whom Mr. Thomas had been vainly seeking and who by the oddest coincidence turned up in Beverly Hills shouting that only four days before he had received a threat against his life, via telephone, from "an agent of the OGPU." Mr. Thomas promptly demanded FBI protection for Kravchenko, who will testify further in Washington—unless, as Mr. Thomas says, the committee decides to come here *en masse* to question the "hundreds of Communists" the two Jacks (Warner and Moffitt) listed for it. He will testify, that is, if our government continues to honor his status as a "political refugee" and still refuses to turn him over to the Soviet Union as a deserter from the Red Army.

THE reaction to all this business is rather mixed. There is much indignation; a good deal of it is regarded as a bad joke; but a considerable number of people who should know better have been rather scared. The Progressive Citizens of America tried to place an advertisement denouncing the inquisition in the local papers and were turned down, except by the *Daily News* and the *People's World*. Henry A. Wallace blasted the Thomas-Rankin cabal at a PCA meeting attended by 20,000 in Gilmore Stadium. An AYD group picketed the Biltmore. But aside from this there has been no organized activity to counter the intellectual terror the committee has been trying to create.

It is noteworthy that not a single trade union has protested; no outstanding personalities in the film capital have cared to stick their necks out and denounce the committee in public. Most people were content to sit out the storm of hot air and implied lightning and breathe a sigh of relief when Chairman Thomas left for San Francisco after reaffirming his conclusions, which he had announced in advance. The most important thing he discovered is that the Roosevelt administration (as he suspected) gave "aid and comfort to the Communists" in the film industry by, as he described it, forcing prominent and patriotic players to act in pro-Red films.

But if there were any kind of unity among the progressives here, the outcome might have been different, for most of them realize exactly what is going on. Behind the whole thing is the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, whose current president is Robert Taylor. The aforementioned McGuinness is closely associated, as are Richard Arlen (who also ran), Lela Rogers and her daughter, Menjou and others. Moffitt probably thinks of himself as a secret agent. (Or did.)

Others working with MPA are a number of dissident screenwriters such as Fred Niblo, Jr. and Howard Emmet Rogers—the latter, with McGuinness, attempted in 1936 to wreck the Screen Writers' Guild by starting a company union called the Screen Playwrights. They would still like to do this job. For the MPA is strictly a company-minded outfit that should be called the MPA for the Preservation of Producers' Rights, Company Unionism and the Promotion of Anti-Semitism, Anti-Negroism and fascism.

It was characterized in those terms in 1944 by unanimous vote of 1,000 delegates representing the seventeen member-unions of the Council of Hollywood Guilds and Unions, and its speakers (McGuinness, Niblo, Frank Gruber and others) were practically howled down when they tried to "explain" to a membership meeting of the SWG that they were really not anti-union, anti-Semitic or pro-fascist. Like J. L. Warner, it has been collecting and circulating a blacklist of "Reds," is said to have paid the expenses of the House Committee's inquisitors and the minor extortionists of our local un-American outfit, the Tenney gang. It has imported assorted professional Russia-haters (Sidney Hook, Eugene Lyons, Louis Fischer and William Henry Chamberlin) to lecture the Beverly Hills matrons, not being willing, apparently, to leave them to the tender mercies of Adolphe Menjou. It has recently hired an executive secretary in the person of one Dr. John Lechner, a notorious organizer of anti-Japanese societies and other nationalist groups, and it has set itself up in business as one extension of the anti-labor, anti-Soviet, thought-control drive throughout the country.

FOR the anti-labor drive, with what it represents in terms of the overall crusade of American imperialism for markets and eventually that long-dreamed of war to destroy the Soviet Union and democracy everywhere, is of course the monstrous reality of which the current witch-hunt in Hollywood is the serious, if somewhat ludicrous shadow. For the past year there has been a steady falling-off of employment among film-workers; contract writers' options are being systematically dropped when they come due, offers of reemployment are more and more frequently coupled with fran wage-cuts running up to fifty percent with a "promise" of the balance "if the picture is shot." Progressive writers—whether they can be smeared with red paint or not—are being quietly dropped from the industry unless they are really top men or women, who seem so far unaffected by the Red scare since their names are almost invariably attached to top-grossing films. The long lockout of progressive unionists is still unsettled; production of films is at a new low with re-releases

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not only guaranteeing more profits but more unemployment for all categories of workers.

Add this to the announced rash of anti-Soviet and anti-Communist films and a broader picture will emerge of how Hollywood big business, like any whore, is accommodating itself to the demands of the bipartisan foreign and domestic policy. Warner producer Jerry Wald and Warner director Delmer Daves, responsible together for *Pride of the Marines* and *Destination Tokio*, and separately for *Action in the North Atlantic* and many other progressive films, are collaborating on an anti-Communist film.

These two individuals are quite symptomatic of what is happening here, for Wald used to pride himself on being an anti-fascist and Daves was a Republican for Roosevelt and a militant member of the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee. Sensitive to wind-direction, they are preparing a thing that will attack "both communism and fascism," and Wald, in a burst of conscience, is said to have offered to send the script to Henry Wallace and make any changes the latter might suggest!

The Great Zanuck who made *Wilson* is now trying to concoct a thing called *The Iron Curtain*, basing himself on the Canadian "spy-scare." The frightened Kravchenko frankly admits he is in Hollywood to sell his book, *I Chose Freedom*, to the movies. The Moffitt mentioned above is trying to sell one of his peculiar brainwaves called *Prisoners of the Kremlin*, to prove that Hitler and his coterie are alive and being held by Uncle Joe to use as barter with the United Nations, though what the UN would do with them Moffitt hasn't quite figured out. A hack called Steve Fisher is trying to peddle an adaptation of Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, and MGM, which produced *Song of Russia*, will probably not have to force Robert Taylor to play in *The Red Danube*, if it ever gets made. Interesting sidelight: all studios contemplating anti-Soviet and anti-Communist films are trying desperately to get "liberal" writers to do the jobs, but the liberal writers seem to feel that this would be stool-pigeon work and are turning the stories down for one reason or another. So it should not be very long before *Comrade X*, *Ninotchka*, *Chetniks* and other putrefying red herrings are resurrected.

Progressive people both in and out of Hollywood know what the job they have to do will entail. In a speech before the Americanism Defense League, a nationalist outfit that stemmed out of the America First Committee, Howard Emmet Rogers once said: "Producers sell pictures to exhibitors, who in turn must show them at theaters where you must buy tickets. So if you wanted to you could put (them) out of business by not attending . . ."

Progressives therefore might take a leaf out of Mr. Rogers' book—not by putting producers out of business, but by demonstrating in no uncertain terms that the need for entertainment has not made of us a nation of Mithridates, whose favorite food was poison. A boycott of rotten, reactionary and un-American films can have as salutary an effect on a producer as a first-class rent-strike can have on a landlord, or a high-powered buyers' strike can have on manufacturers, or a potent citizens' protest can have on a bipartisan policy. Organization for freedom is still the answer to reaction, unemployment, fascism and war.

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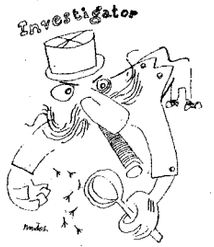
portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS



News Item: Richard Arlen, movie actor, accuses some Hollywood writers of weaving Communist propaganda under the guise of innocuous statements.

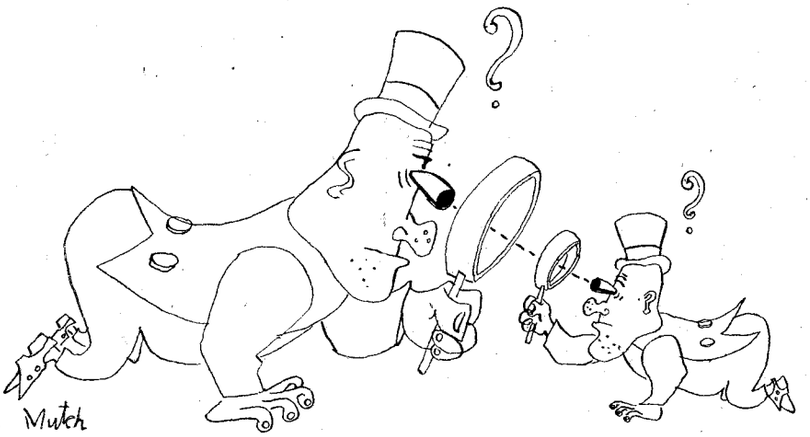
Those screen writers may fool some people but they don't fool me. Just one Hollywood double feature is enough to make me see red. There is Communist propaganda hidden in just about every picture produced in this country. For instance:

The hero of the picture grabs the leading lady who turns pale beneath six layers of rouge and powder. "You look good enough to eat," he says. A seemingly innocuous statement but the implication is plain — cannibalism in capitalist America. This line may often be switched to "I'm so hungry I could eat a horse" which also casts aspersions on the American Way of Life.

Then we have this same leading lady standing before an immense closet complaining: "I haven't got a thing to wear." To the discerning moviegoer it is obvious that there are at least fifty dresses in her wardrobe but the average patron is left with the impression that people in this country are inadequately clothed. As if this insidious propaganda weren't enough, the script usually calls for the young lady to spend the entire picture clad in nothing but a negligee merely to illustrate this and other points.

The handsome leading man often exclaims: "Darling, everything I have is yours." Love? Affection? Certainly not! Pure and simple Bolshevik "share the wealth" ideology. This same unknowing tool is also heard to say: "Brenda, we can't go on this way." This hint at revolution is planted by writers in dozens of pictures.

The sweater craze was started by Communists seeking to establish a Popular Front in America. Obviously what we need is a Czar in Hollywood whose job it would be to eliminate all the innocuous statements from movies even if it means cutting the average film ninety percent.



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MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE

Ten years have passed since that blood-stained date, May 30, 1937. Many have forgotten; millions more have joined the labor and progressive movement since that time and do not know this story. But it is well that all of us remember—and in remembering, act. For this is what is meant by today's headlines, by today's sessions of Congress: this is what will happen again if the Taft-Hartley anti-labor bill is enacted. This is the program of the NAM and the Chamber of Commerce. This is what they want to do to America—to you. They're moving fast—are you?—The Editors.

It was a day for parades, picnics and boat-rides—and tear-gas, bullets and death.

By HOWARD FAST

MEMORIAL DAY in Chicago in 1937 was hot, humid and sunny; it was the right kind of a day for the parade and the holiday, the kind of a day that takes the soreness out of a Civil War veteran's back and makes him feel like stepping out with the youngsters a quarter his age. It was a day for picnics, for boating, for the beach or a long ride into the country. It was a day when patriotic sentiments could be washed down comfortably with Coca-Cola or a Tom Collins, as you preferred. And there's no doubt but that a good deal of that holiday feeling was present in the strikers who gathered on the prairie outside and around Republic Steel's Chicago plant.

Most of the strikers felt good. Tom Girdler, who ran Republic, had said that he would go back to hoeing potatoes before he met the strikers' demands, and word went around that old Tom could do worse than earn an honest living hoeing potatoes. The strike was less than a week old; the strikers had not yet felt the pinch of hunger, and there was a good sense of solidarity everywhere. Because it was such a fine summer day, many of the strikers brought their children out onto the prairie to attend the first big mass meeting; and wherever you looked, you saw two-year-olds and three-year-olds riding pick-a-back on the shoulders of steel-workers. And because it was in the way of being their special occasion as well as a patriotic holiday, the women wore their best and brightest.

In knots and clusters, the younger folks two by two, the older people in family groups, they drifted toward Sam's place on South Green Bay Avenue. Once, Sam's place had been a ten-cent-a-dance hall; now it was strike headquarters, which meant, in terms of the strike, just about everything. There the women had set up their soup kitchen, and there the union strategy board planned the day-to-day work; food was collected at Sam's place, and pickets used it as their barracks and headquarters.

Today, several thousand people gathered around the improvised platform set up at Sam's place, to listen to the speakers and to take part in the mass demonstration. How serious an occasion it was they knew well enough; rumors circulated that the police were going to attempt something special, something out of the run of clubbing and gassing which had marked the strike from the very first day; rumors too that a mass picket line was going to be established today. It was a serious occasion, but somehow something in the day, the holiday, the sunshine and the warm summer weather made the festive air persist. Vendors wheeled wagons of cold pop, and brick ice cream, three flavors in one, was to be had at a nickel a cake.

For the young folks, it was the first strike; they sat under the trees with the girls, grinning at the way the strike committee worked and poured sweat; and the women, cooking inside the hall, reflected, as a hundred generations of women had reflected before, that man's work is from sun to sun, but woman's work. . . .

A group of girls sang. Strike songs were around, a new turn in the folk literature of the nation. First shyly, hesitantly, then with more vigor, with a rising volume augmented by the deep bass and rich baritone of the men, they sang the deathless tale of Joe Hill, the song-maker and organizer whom the cops had killed; they sang, "Solidarity forever, the union makes us strong . . ." They sang of the nameless IWW worker, tortured into treason, who pleaded, "Comrades, slay me, for the coppers took my soul; close my eyes, good comrades, for I played a traitor's role."

THE meeting started and came down to business. The chairman was Joe Weber, who represented the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee. Outlining the purpose of the mass meeting, he flung an arm at the Republic plant, a third of a mile down the road. Twenty-five thousand men were on strike; their purpose was to picket peacefully, to win a decent raise in wages so that they might exist like human beings. But there had been constant, brutal provocation by the police. Well, they were gathered here, as was their constitutional right, to protest that interference.

Dozens of strikers had been arrested, beaten, waylaid; strikers' property, as for example a sound truck, had been smashed and destroyed. Even women had been beaten, dragged off to jail, treated obscenely. The National Labor Relations Act guaranteed them their rights; today they were going to demonstrate in support of those rights.

Other speakers backed up Weber. When the audience cheered some point, the children present gurgled with delight and clapped their hands. As soon as the meeting had finished the strikers and their wives and children began to form their picketline. After all, this was Memorial Day; the thing took on a parade air. Some of the strikers had made their own placards; also, a whole forest of them appeared from inside the union hall, made by committees. The slogans were simple, direct and non-violent: "REPUBLIC STEEL VIOLATES LABOR DISPUTES ACT." "WIN WITH THE CIO." "NO FASCISM IN AMERICA." "REPUBLIC STEEL SHALL SIGN A UNION CONTRACT."

The signs were handed out, many of them to boys and girls who carried

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them proudly. At the head of the column that was forming, two men took their place with American flags. The news reporters, who had come up by car only a short while before, were hopping about now, snapping everything. For some reason that has never been analyzed, news photographers and strikers get along very well, even when the photographers come from McCormick's Chicago *Tribune*. There was a lot of good-natured give and take. When the column began to march, down the road from Sam's place first, and then across the prairie toward the Republic Steel plant, the news photographers moved with it, some walking, some by car. This fact later turned into a vital part of American labor history.

Republic Steel stood abrupt out of the flat prairie. Snake-like, the line of pickets crossed the meadowland, singing at first: "Solidarity forever, the union makes us strong . . ."; but then sound died as the sun-drenched plain turned ominous, as five hundred blue-coated policemen took up stations between the strikers and the plant. The strikers' march slowed—but they came on. The police ranks closed and tightened. It brought to mind how other Americans had faced the uniformed

Camel Caravan

Winston-Salem, N. C.

FROM the heights of the rolling city of Winston-Salem, overlooking the town and the sprawling plants of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., a huge sign proclaims that "Camels Lead the World." But under that very sign, and under the giant smokestacks of the world's largest tobacco plant, 10,000 singing, marching, determined Negro and white pickets are proving, in their strike against this powerful company, that it's the CIO which is leading the workers in their fight for decent wages and a better life.

This strike against the makers of Camels, Prince Albert pipe tobacco and other tobacco products has become the major battlefront of "Operation Dixie," the CIO organizing drive. It began at midnight, April 30, when—after weeks of negotiations—the Reynolds Company refused FTA-CIO Local 22's demands for a union contract and a fifteen-cent-an-hour wage increase, instead offering 5½ cents and a cut in overtime pay for 1,200 seasonal workers. This is a city whose food prices are the second highest in the United States.

Union negotiating committee members, reporting to the membership of the union, disclosed that when they bluntly asked the company "Do you mean to tell us that you can't afford to pay the workers a fifteen-cent increase?" company representatives replied: "No, we just won't do it."

Reynolds' profits in 1946, after all costs including wages were paid but before taxes, were $49,309,000. For each dollar they paid a worker in wages, they made three dollars in profits—the highest rate of any company in the country.

Strike committees, rapidly organized, are functioning like clockwork. The role of Local 22 in developing Negro and white unity and Negro working-class leadership is flattening out the hoary myths about the South's working people. Since the strike began more white workers have joined FTA-CIO than ever before.

FTA pickets like to sing. They put their feelings into words, and their words into a song, and pretty soon every line at each of the seventy-three plant gates swells the chorus. Behind the scenes, Ruth Davenport, chairman of the singing committee, and a picket captain during the day, works with her committee to put these new songs in writing. A glee club has been formed under her direction which carries the story of their fight to the people of Winston-Salem.

The veterans' committee of Local 22, under the chairmanship of John Henry Minor and C. C. Anderson, has also done a job in rallying Local 22's vets, of whom there are close to 700. The thirteenth day of the strike witnessed a demonstration of 400 Negro and white veterans in uniform such as Winston-Salem had never seen. They marched from the union hall in squads of twenty-five and broke ranks outside the plant to relieve regular pickets. News of the demonstration spread and soon thousands of citizens were lining the sidewalks, singing and cheering for "our boys."

"We ate Spam over there, now we want good food and the money to buy it," was the way the veterans' picket signs told their story.

COMMUNITY support for the strikers has come from merchants, farmers, ministers and citizens from every walk of life who recognize the battle of R. J. Reynolds strikers as their own—to improve the living conditions in the community, to overcome the race-hate spread by the bosses in the South, and to win the FDR program of security and peace for all.

A Negro Citizens' Committee to Aid Camels Strikers, headed by Rev. R. L. Pitts, has called nation-wide attention to the strike as a turning point for the people of the South. "A new pattern for the South is being set here," they said, pointing to the growing "political emancipation of the Negro people, and their acceptance by the white community . . . as leaders and allies in the common fight to free the South from economic exploitation and poverty."

Five days after the strike began Rev. Kenneth Williams, young Negro and war veteran, backed by a United Labor Committee of AFL and CIO unions, was swept into office by the highest vote in the city, to become the first Negro alderman in Winston-Salem since Reconstruction days.

Yes, there's a new South being born, and the old masters are fighting desperately to strangle it. Here in Winston-Salem big business has launched its first major counter-attack against the CIO Southern drive. The strikers have the spirit and everything it takes to win—everything but food, medicine and rent for themselves and their families. For these things they count on help from progressive people in all parts of the country.

CYNTHIA ISENBERG.

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force of so-called law and order so long ago on Lexington Green in 1775; but whereas then the redcoat leader had said, "Disperse, you rebel bastards!" to armed minutemen, now it was to unarmed men and women and children that a police captain said, "You dirty sons of bitches, this is as far as you go!"

About two hundred and fifty yards from the plant, the police closed in on the strikers. Billies and clubs were out already, prodding, striking, nightsticks edging into women's breasts and groins. It was great fun for the cops who were also somewhat afraid, and they began to jerk guns out of holsters.

"Stand fast! Stand fast!" the line leaders cried. "We got our right! We got our legal rights to picket!"

The cops said, "You got no rights. You Red bastards, you got no rights."

EVEN if a modern man's a steelworker, with muscles as close to iron bands as human flesh gets, a pistol equalizes him with a weakling, a fat-bellied cop—and more than equalizes. Grenades began to sail now; tear-gas settled like an ugly cloud. Children suddenly cried with panic, and the whole picketline gave back, men stumbling, cursing, gasping for breath. Here and there, a cop tore out his pistol and began to fire; it was pop, pop, pop at first, like toy favors at some horrible party, and then, as the strikers broke under the gunfire and began to run, the contagion of killing ran like fire through the police.

They began to shoot in volleys. It was wonderful sport, because these pickets were unarmed men and women and children; they could not strike back or fight back. The cops squealed with excitement. They ran after fleeing men and women, pressed revolvers to their backs, shot them down and then continued to shoot as the victims lay on their faces, retching blood. When a woman tripped and fell, four cops gathered above her, smashing in her flesh and bones and face. Oh, it was great sport, wonderful sport for gentle, pot-bellied police, who mostly had to confine their pleasures to beating up prostitutes and street peddlers —at a time when Chicago was world-infamous as a center of gangsterism, assorted crime and murder.

And so it went, on and on, until ten were dead or dying and over a hundred wounded. And the field a blood-stained field of battle. World War veterans there said that never in France had they seen anything as brutal as this.

Now, of course, this brief account might be passed off as a complete exaggeration, as one-sided, and so forth —the same arguments might be used that are constantly thrown up whenever it is a case of labor versus capital or labor versus the police. It might be said, as the Chicago *Tribune* said the next day, that this was the doing of Reds who were plotting to take over the plant, and the police had only done their duty.

But the photographers were on the spot, and everything I have described here and a good deal more was taken down with both newsreel and still cameras. The stills and the moving pictures were placed on exhibit during the hearing on Republic Steel held by the subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor; and I recommend to the special attention of anyone interested in checking this bit of labor history Exhibit 1418, Exhibit 1414, Exhibit 1351, and the morbid chart of gunshot wounds—in the back—known as Exhibit 1463.

That, in brief — and most brief, since the space here is limited—is a summary of what happened in Chicago on May 30, 1937. These events, which came to be known as the Memorial Day Massacre, shook the nation as did few other acts of anti-labor violence since the Haymarket Affair of the 1880's. Later, the Senate Committee's investigation highlighted them, and brought home to the American people the full savagery of the police and the men who ran Republic Steel. But then the war washed the memory out for a time, and to understand fully today what happened then in Chicago, certain other facts must be noted.

IN MEMORIAM

Victims of the Memorial Day Massacre, 1937

Alfred Causey
Leo Francisco
Earl Handley
Hilding Johnson
Otis Jones
Sam Popovich
Kenneth Reed
Joseph Rothmund
Anthony Tagliori
Lee Tisdale

They died for democracy; their cause can never die.

LET us look at the situation of the steel industry after the worst part of the depression. Taking United States Steel as an example, we find that by 1935 the firm was well on the way over the hump, with a net profit of $6,106,488. Wheels had begun to turn again in America, and the next year's profit took an enormous jump upward, a net of $55,501,787 in 1936. Then the graph inclined even more sharply, and in the first three months of 1937, the company recorded a net profit of $28,561,533.

This was *big steel.* Republic, a light steel industry, was a part of what was known as *little steel,* and while the profits there were smaller—$4,000,000 in 1935 and $9,500,000 in 1936 —they were part of the upward spiral.

It was within this framework of hot furnaces and mounting profits that the CIO began to organize. And as they built their industrial unions, the steel companies built their armed goon squads. It was in 1936 that the CIO began to make real progress in organizing the steel industry, and by the middle of 1937 half a million steel workers had joined the union. Over 750 union lodges were formed, and by now most of the steel manufacturers had realized that it was a most destructive kind of insanity to fight organization. Again, by June 1937, some 125 companies had signed union contracts. Among these firms, which employed 310,000 workers, were Carnegie-Illinois and several other subsidiaries of US Steel.

But the big independents, the Little Steel combine, still held out. Let us name them as they stood on that Memorial Day of 1937. There was Tom Girdler's Republic Steel, employing 53,000 workers. There was Bethlehem Steel, with 82,000 workers. There was Youngstown Sheet & Tube, with 27,000. Then there were the smaller firms—National Steel, American Rolling Mills and Inland Steel. Altogether these firms employed almost 200,000 workers and they accounted for almost forty percent of the steel produced in America.

They were lined up for a knock-down, drag-out fight; no quarter asked, no quarter given. Tom Girdler was granted nominal leadership; a latter-day "robber baron," to use Matthew Josephson's phrase, he was a natural for such a position, and we shall see later how his tactics led to the Memorial Day Massacre.

But he did not introduce the con-

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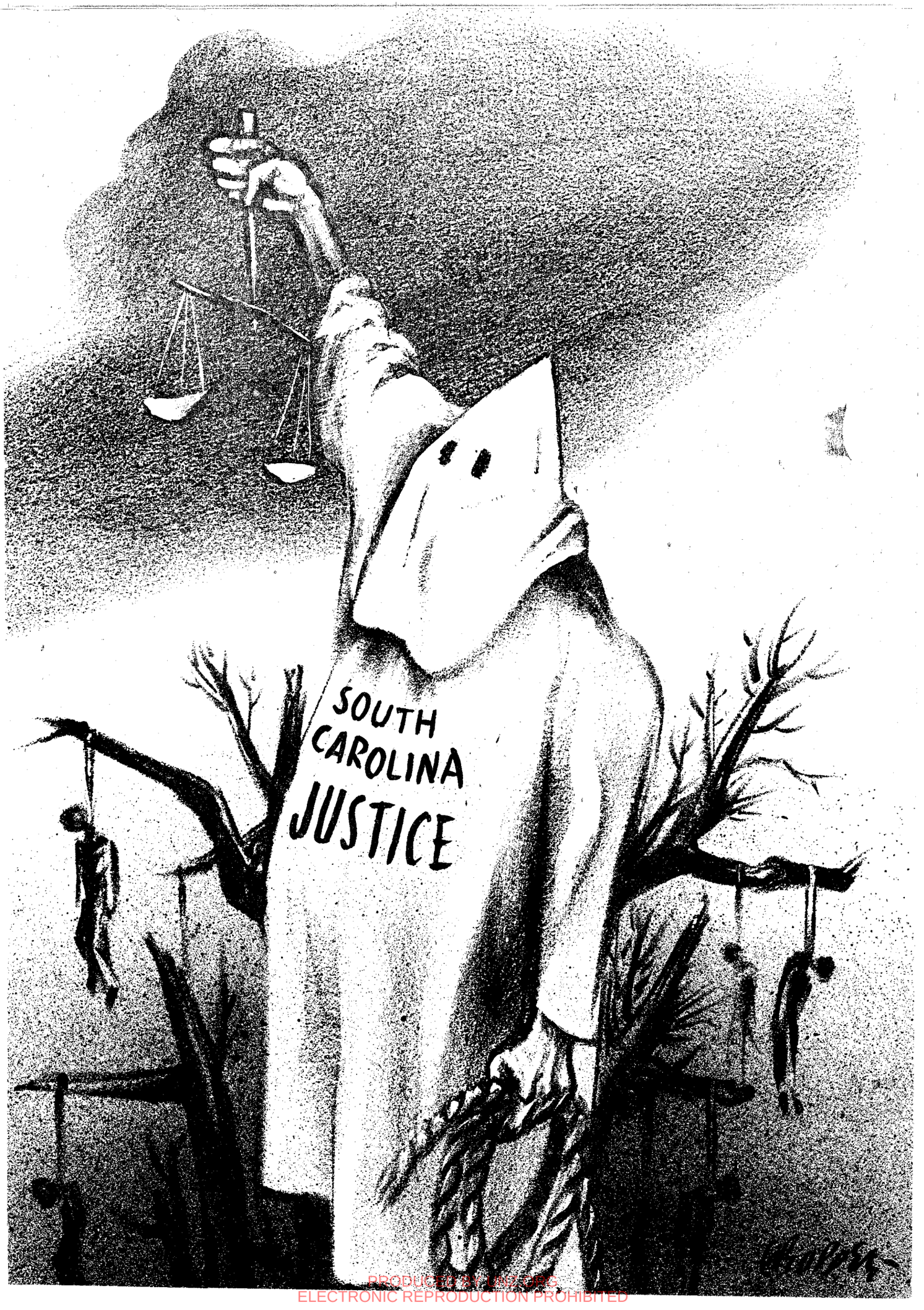

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cept of violence; it was not necessary for him to do so. As far back as 1933 the steel companies were arming themselves for the coming struggle. For example, the following order was shipped to Bethlehem Steel. The invoice entered on the books of Federal Laboratories, and signed by A. G. Bergman, is dated Sept. 30, 1933:

12 blast-type billies
100 blast-type billies, cartridges
24 Jumbo CN grenades lot No. X820
24 military bouchons
48 1½ in. cal. projectile shells (CN)
24 1½ in. cal. short range shells (CN)
4 1½ in. cal. riot guns, style 201, sr. No. 337,386,390,403
4 riot gun cases

That makes for quite a sizable armament, but Youngstown Sheet & Tube went in for more and deadlier protection against unarmed strikers and their dangerous wives and children. On June 6, 1934, this firm was billed for the following order:

10 1½ in. cal. riot gun 201, $60 ea.
10 riot gun cases 211, $7.50 ea.
60 1½ in. cal. long range projectiles, $7.50 ea.
60 1½ in. cal. short range projectiles, $4.50 ea.
60 M-39 billies, std. barrel, no disc., $22.50 ea.
600 M-39 billy cartridges, $1.50 ea.
200 grenades 160M, 10% disc., $12 ea.

THESE are only two examples of widespread gun-toting by the steel companies. Nor were these the only techniques they used. They hired spies and special agents. They organized goon squads composed of thugs, professional gangsters and assorted degenerates. They bribed police chiefs and sheriffs.

And under their natural leader, Tom Girdler, they set themselves for violence.

That was part of the background to the Memorial Day Massacre. Another part was Tom Girdler himself, and it is worthwhile to look into that gentleman's history.

The second and concluding installment of Mr. Fast's article will appear next week.

THIRD PARTY IN '48?

Is there enough sentiment for it? Will it make a GOP victory inevitable? Some questions answered on this vital topic.

By A. B. MAGIL

THE CIO United Packinghouse Workers' Union at its recent convention unanimously went on record in favor of establishing a third party. This is nothing new for the packinghouse workers. And in the past year other CIO unions—the United Automobile Workers and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, for example—have adopted similar resolutions.

What *is* new is the fix we're in. Not completely new, of course. But the situation has matured, much that was previously blurred has come into focus. In April 1946, when the UAW executive board adopted its resolution on political action, urging "work toward the eventual formation of a broad third party," it stated that "President Truman and his administration are yielding and capitulating on issue after issue to the forces of reaction." Today it is no longer a question merely of yielding and capitulating — though there's plenty of that. It was Truman himself who, with Wall Street calling the signals, carried the ball labeled "aid to Greece and Turkey." Yes, Vandenberg and Dulles and other GOP stalwarts have labored powerfully toward the same end, but the piano player in the White House has stepped out of his role of diligent accompanist and become a virtuoso of imperialist reaction in his own right. In this sense those who speak of the President's "growing stature" are entirely correct.

On domestic questions the situation is complicated by tactical differences and partisan maneuvers, as a result of which Truman finds it expedient to seize the initiative from the Republicans only occasionally. Yet whether there is teamwork or conflict, underlying the relations between the administration and the GOP is a division of labor toward agreed objectives. This is exemplified by two newspaper headlines that appeared on two successive days: "Senate Adopts Labor Curbs by a Margin Large Enough to Override a Truman Veto," and "Truman Signs Portal Ban." It is further exemplified in the outrageous Truman loyalty order and Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach's no less outrageous proposal to outlaw the Communist Party — administration initiative in both instances receiving vigorous Republican support.

After all that has happened in recent months, after the orgiastic profiteering and pocket-picking on the part of the trusts, isn't it about time? Time to say with the packinghouse workers: "For all practical purposes the major parties present us with a choice of Tweedledum and Tweedledee." This is not to deny that there are in the Democratic Party (and to a lesser extent in the Republican) progressives who are courageously battling to save what remains of the Roosevelt legacy. This is not to overlook the role of senators like Pepper, Taylor, Murray and Morse and their counterparts in the House, who don't sneeze every time their party chiefs take snuff and who are able to see the ordinary folks of America even behind the mammoth form of monopoly that sprawls over most of the seats in the chambers of Congress. But the fact remains that there is little, if anything, to choose between the policies that today dominate the Republican and Democratic parties nationally—little, if anything, to choose between the men who are likely to be the Presidential candidates of the two parties of big business.

It's time to try something else. The degenerate nature of capitalism is becoming increasingly evident to millions in other lands who refuse to become vassals of Wall Street and are moving toward the vital democracy of socialism. But in our country, where capitalism commits its greatest crimes, we still have to create an elementary political instrument through which

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under the present setup a majority of the people can act to fulfill their needs. We can see what happens in the absence of such an instrument: the public opinion polls show that despite the fact that nearly two out of every three Americans want aid to Greece and Turkey handled by the United Nations, disillusionment in the Republicans proceeds simultaneously with a rise in Truman's stock.

Something else has happened that's new. There are increasing signs that the narcotic effects of the Republican victory are wearing off. In a special primary election in Washington's Third Congressional District, ex-Rep. Charles A. Savage, a Wallace Democrat, defeated a Red-baiting Truman Democrat, the total Democratic vote being almost twice that of the GOP. In Oakland, Cal., a labor-progressive slate gave a beating to the Republican Knowland-Warren machine, electing a mayor and four out of five councilmen. (Incidentally, the Communist candidate for school director polled 23,000 votes, thirty-eight percent of the total.) In Hoboken, N. J., a good government fusion ticket, led by a vice-president of the CIO Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers, swept out a reactionary Democratic city administration that had been in power for twenty-two years. In Passaic, N. J., three of four PAC-endorsed candidates won in a local election.

All these victories point in the direction of independent progressivism and are potential capital for a new party. True, they are only beginnings and it would be absurd to draw from them more than tentative conclusions. But they indicate—and the same holds true of the enthusiastic welcome Henry Wallace has received on his nation-wide speaking trip—that possibilities exist for reversing the results of last November and for giving permanent political form to the democratic strivings of the people.

BUT, some will say, a new party is a hopeless proposition; there are too many obstacles in the way. The answer is not to dismiss these obstacles, which are very real, but to organize a movement powerful enough to surmount them. Getting on the ballot is tough in many states, but not nearly as tough as getting together that coalition of labor, farmers, middle-class folk and the Negro people—of independents and progressive Democrats—out of which the new party must be born. History never sets hopeless tasks. Once it is recognized that for the American people in 1948 there literally is no alternative to a party of their own, the tools can be fashioned to do the job. It will mean backbreaking effort and heartache, but not doing it will be even more painful.

Is there enough public sentiment for a new party? In a country in which we are brought up to regard the two-party system as sacred and immutable, one should rather ask: is there substantial public sentiment against the two old parties? According to a recent *Fortune* (Roper) poll, 23 percent of Roosevelt voters switched to the Republican Party in the last election; this was the determining factor in winning a majority for the GOP. The poll also discovered that, far from having abandoned the Roosevelt ideals, these "Republican converts" hold views that "more closely parallel New Deal attitudes than do those of the US people as a whole" and in some respects more than those of the Democratic voters in 1946. This is a deeply significant phenomenon. What this means is that millions of Roosevelt voters, repelled by the Truman policies, turned to the GOP, not because it represented what they believed in, but because they saw no other way to register their protest. In addition, there were millions more who expressed their disgust by not voting at all.

Suppose there had been a genuine people's party in the field. Isn't it reasonable to assume that a large number, perhaps a majority of both the "Republican converts" and the stay-at-homes would have voted for its candidates? But this isn't the whole story. After all, many Democratic voters cast their ballots for progressive candidates—for men and women who represented the Roosevelt tradition. A new party would have also embraced these Democratic voters.

As for those who consciously favor a new party today, their number is greater than is generally imagined. Several months ago the Gallup poll asked a cross-section of the voters: "If a third party is formed in this country by Henry Wallace, Claude Pepper, the CIO and other labor groups, do you think you would vote for that party?" In view of the broad coalition nature of this party, the question can hardly be said to have been phrased in a way to appeal to farmers and middle-class people. Ten percent of the voters answered this question in the affirmative, 78 percent in the negative, and 12 percent had no opinion. Ten percent of the electorate in 1944 would have been a little under 5,000,000 votes. When it is remembered that no real campaign has been developed for a new party and that this poll was taken before the Truman Doctrine and before the current Congressional obscenities, 5,000,000 votes to start with is a very substantial number. It represents the bedrock on which an impressive structure can be built. And even if we consider only these 5,000,000 votes, they are enough to be the balance of power in most national elections.

IN SPEAKING on the question of a new party and an independent Presidential ticket I have invariably been asked: wouldn't they make a Republican victory in 1948 inevitable, since they would be likely to attract more voters from the Democrats than from the Republicans? This is a question that requires more than a yes or no answer. In the first place, assuming that no new party and ticket emerge, will the re-election of Truman (he seems fairly certain to be the Democratic candidate) rather than a Dewey or a Taft or a Vandenberg make a *substantial* difference in terms of foreign and domestic policy? On the basis of the record, especially the record of the past year, I think it would be difficult to argue persuasively that it would. Second, how good are Truman's chances even without any third ticket? Not too good if we are to judge by the fortunes of the Democratic Party since the Civil War. Between 1860 and 1932 the Democratic Party elected a President only four times: Cleveland twice and Wilson twice. Two of the Democratic victories, in 1884 and 1916, were by the narrowest of margins; on a third occasion, in 1912, the Democratic candidate, Wilson, won only because the Republican Party was split by the Bull Moose revolt. Only in 1892, when Cleveland defeated an ineffectual Republican President, Benjamin Harrison, did the Democratic Party score a cleancut victory (though even that time the popular vote was close).

What does this mean? So long as the Democratic Party remained predominantly based on the post-Reconstruction South, with all the conservatism that this implies, and so long as

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the bulk of the voters in the North and West were not impelled by economic conditions toward unorthodox political action, the Democratic Party was as a rule unable to compete with the Republican Party for the allegiance of the electorate. It was only when the tornado of the Great Depression swept millions out of their accustomed grooves and when Franklin D. Roosevelt, responding to the demands of these millions, developed a program which fused a broad coalition around him, that the Democrats became for the first time a true majority party. Can a small-bore politician like Harry Truman abandon that program and shatter the coalition and still win? Perhaps. But remember that even FDR had to extend himself in 1944 to defeat Dewey in wartime. What can be expected of Truman in 1948? And if it is argued that the Republicans in Congress may so discredit themselves as to play into Truman's hands, my answer is: aren't those hands too busy embracing rather than fighting the GOP for that to be likely?

The essential question before the American people is not whether it is possible to reelect a President who in some respects may be slightly less vicious than his Republican opponent. It is whether it is possible for the people to fashion a political party and Presidential ticket of their own—a party which, while it may not succeed in winning power on its first try, will nevertheless become a power, capable of influencing whatever administration takes office and capable, moreover, of achieving its highest goal in 1952. These are the real alternatives. Furthermore, such a people's movement, besides putting forward its own candidates for Congress wherever necessary and feasible, could also support progressives in the two old parties. This would make possible a reversal of the 1946 results even should a Republican win the Presidency.

In an interview on his return from Europe Henry Wallace said: "If it [the Democratic Party] doesn't become a liberal party there will have to be some steps taken. Sooner or later the forward-looking people of the United States will have to have some political mechanism for expressing themselves. If both parties are conservative there absolutely would have to be a party formed."

The "if" has actually become obsolete. Both major parties *are* conservative—or, more accurately, reactionary. While they fiddle, a new economic holocaust is about to sear the lives of our people. Wallace has returned with a fighting message that can help unite all democratic Americans. When it is already so late, the new party that *must* come cannot come too soon.

SAVED BY THE SALE

A Short Story by YURI SUHL

FRIDAY was pay-day, the most wonderful day of the week. I quivered with excitement at the thought of receiving my first salary in America, and the meat blocks quivered under the block brush as I scrubbed them to a white surface.

Around one in the afternoon Mr. Resnik left for the slaughter-house to pick out his meat for Saturday night. He said he'd be back at four o'clock, by which time he expected to find the store spick-and-span: the ice-box scrubbed, the meat grinder stripped and washed, the knives and cleavers shining down from the hooks. He didn't expect any customers for the two left-over chickens that hung forlornly on the window rack, but if somebody showed up to buy them I should sell them as a bargain and get rid of them.

When his hand was on the doorknob, he turned around and dropped a subtle hint: "Make a nice job on the store, Sol. Today is pay-day. When I come back I'll give you a check."

A check!

Throughout the morning, as I sat on the small stool in the back room plucking chickens, or as I rode the bicycle to and from the store, my first week as butcher boy passed before me in review. Measured in terms of days it was a short procession: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. But looked at in terms of experience acquired, it was a long and endless parade of confusion and hope, of despair and delight, of grappling with dead chickens whose feathers stuck tenaciously and wouldn't budge unless the skin went with them, of a bicycle that threw me like a wild broncho, of a boss who kept complaining: "*Oi*, Sol, Sol, what shall I do with you?"

Now the feathers were cooperating beautifully, the bicycle was well behaved, the customers were already calling me by my first name instead of: "Hey, *boytchik!*" and when Mr. Resnik sent me into the ice-box for the shoulder of lamb, I didn't come back with the shoulder of veal.

And soon, very soon, I would reap the reward for it all—eight American dollars! I broke them up into white rolls and saw myself taking over a whole bakery. I added two more dollars and had a brand-new suit (not exactly custom tailored). But best of all I liked to see myself walking into Shirley's candy store, putting down a dollar bill on the counter and saying: "I'll have the best banana split in the house."

Would Mr. Resnik pay me in singles or in a five and three singles? It was a matter of speculation, of course. But no more. Now I knew it would be a check. A check had to be cashed and I knew right away where I'd cash it. At Morris Finkel's drugstore where my father cashed his weekly fifteen dollar check—where all the immigrants in the neighborhood cashed their checks because they trusted him. And they liked him because he was one of them who had made good. They all knew that he had come from Rumania a poor boy in rags and half-starved; that he had worked as pants presser by day and studied at night until he became a pharmacist. But that wasn't all. He was also a notary public and spoke five different languages: Russian, Polish, German, Rumanian and Yiddish. "Doctor Finkel," they called him, and although he protested mildly that he was only a druggist, they insisted on calling him doctor and there was nothing he could do about it.

They brought him their legal documents for interpretation as though they were medical prescriptions; and they brought their medical prescriptions to him with the belief that if he personally prepared them the chances for the patient's recovery were as good as

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assured. His drugstore was partly Hias [Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society], partly Ellis Island, partly a family relations court and sometimes a drugstore, too. And, of course, he cashed checks for nothing.

Long before Mr. Resnik returned from the slaughter-house, the store was thoroughly cleaned. I looked at the clock in the window. It was three. A whole hour between me and the check. An hour can be interminably long when you wait for your first pay in America. I felt too exhilarated to sit still, so I made a personal tour of inspection around the store. I wanted to make sure that nothing would mar the smile of satisfaction on Mr. Resnik's face.

A chicken feather had eluded my vigilance and hid behind the broom in the back room. It was promptly ferreted out of its hiding place. A little bump of sawdust on the floor had been spared by the rake. I flattened it out. A small blood-speck on the ice-box mirror. Off with it!

Suddenly my eyes beheld the only dismaying sight in the store: the two unsold, half-plucked chickens that hung from the hooks of the window racks. If I could only get rid of them, I sighed. What a wonderful surprise that would make for Mr. Resnik! What a perfect finish to my first week's work in America! I looked at the two miserable, blue-skinned fowl hanging stiffly from the hooks, and hated them. They presented a challenge to me which I could not meet.

I walked up to the window and instinctively my right arm swung out at one of them, as though it were a punching bag. The chicken swung right back at me, scratching my face with its dead claws. I stepped back a little and waited for it to come into position. Then I let go with another jab. Still the fowl came back for more. I punched the other one and it, too, began swinging as though it had come to life again. Now both of them were flying back and forth and I stood here, slightly hunched, fists ready, punching now one, now the other, unaware that I had already attracted a half dozen curious spectators.

Kids pouring out of a nearby public school swarmed up close to the window, flattening their noses against it. They laughed, shouted, waved their hands and stamped their feet. When one of the chickens was punched clear off the hook and hit the window, a

Anne Wienhoff.

roar went up from them and they began to count: one, two, three, as a referee does over a floored prize-fighter.

I forgot about the store, the check, Mr. Resnik and my job. I was now in the ring at Madison Square Garden, the only boxer in the world to take on two opponents at the same time.

The show was at its peak, with a record crowd spilling over the edge of the sidewalk, when a tall policeman, pushing his club ahead of him, came up.

I stopped punching the chickens and wondered what to tell the cop if he questioned me. Then Mr. Resnik himself appeared. His face pale with panic, he charged frantically into the crowd, waving his hands in all directions, as though he were swimming up to the store rather than pushing himself toward it. The cop got there first and only after explaining that he was the proprietor was Mr. Resnik admitted into his own store.

"Sol, what happened?" he sputtered out. "Where is the accident?"

I wanted to say something, but I felt as though my tongue had swollen to an enormous size. I had a mouthful of tongue that wouldn't let a word pass through. So I pointed to the chickens that were still swaying wearily, as though unable to steady themselves after the ordeal.

"For Godsakes," Mr. Resnik began to shake me by the shoulder. "Whatsematter? What happened?"

"Nothing. Nothing happened," I managed to squeeze the words past my swollen tongue. "I played with the chickens, I just punched them a little."

Mr. Resnik glanced at the two swaying fowl and gave me that startled look you give a person when you suddenly doubt his sanity. Then he shrugged, sighed and threw his hands up, all at the same time. The cop was bored with the whole thing and went out to disperse the crowd.

Mr. Resnik took his chin into his hand and reflected on my fate. The way he dropped his hand a moment later I knew that I was doomed. It was like dropping an ax.

He reached for the check-book, made out a check for eight dollars and, handing it to me, said: "You don't

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have to come in to work on Saturday night. I don't think you'll make a good butcher boy. Maybe you should go to a factory and learn a trade."

Outside a few people were still standing in front of the window, letting their curiosity wring the last drops of interest out of my tragic folly. Among them was a short, scrawny-faced woman.

Mr. Resnik took the two chickens off the hook and was about to storage them in the ice-box when the door opened and the scrawny-faced woman came in. Mr. Resnik turned to face her.

"Are these chickens for sale?" the woman inquired in a high-pitched voice.

"Sure, sure," Mr. Resnik's face brightened a little. "I'll make them a bargain for you," and he put them quickly on the scale lest the woman change her mind.

He mentioned a price and the woman agreed to it.

"Sol," Mr. Resnik commanded, "get me a big bag, quick!"

I dashed into the back room and nearly tripped over myself getting that bag. After the woman had paid, she turned to me, patted my back a little and said: "You sure are a smart butcher boy getting your customers that way. I was on my way to get a leg of lamb for Sunday, but I stopped to watch you and decided to get chicken instead."

Mr. Resnik grinned a proud grin, as though he had had a share in this unusual sale. After all, I was his butcher boy, wasn't I?

When the woman was gone he turned to me and said: "All right, Sol, I'll give you another chance. But next time if you have to punch the chickens be careful with the neck. It's a good thing it was a Gentile customer. They don't bother much with stuffed neck. But a Jewish woman looks for the neck first."

"Yes, Mr. Resnik," I said. "I'll be careful."

I said: "*A guten Shabes,*" and went away.

As I boarded the trolley-car I suddenly remembered the check and quickly put my hand into my pocket. It was there. It was like getting paid twice.

This is a second excerpt from Mr. Suhl's unpublished novel. The first appeared in the February 18 NM under the title of "I Find a New Landsman."

mail call

Prison in Athens

To New Masses: I am sure that your readers will be interested in the following letter which I received from a Greek friend.

New York. R. T.

This letter will pass out secretly in the ways we have. In spite of all the difficulties we are faced with in these jails we are holding our heads high. We are crowded together—350 persons in a space which is only for 100. We all are political prisoners.

Every day they bring in new ones and because there is no more room they move us around in a steady stream in groups to other jails in Greece. Even the chapel, which used to have a priest, is now filled with prisoners. The conditions here are anything but human. The food is not worth talking about and there is little medical treatment. There is one doctor who comes once a week and we call him "The Healer." There are people crowded in here who are tubercular and others who are kept together with us who need immediate hospitalization.

We had a visiting room which was available to us two times a week. It was stopped, but after a hunger strike and other struggles we conducted they renewed our privileges again after twenty days without contact with our relatives.

The news on the situation here is probably known to you people before it comes to us. The guerrilla movement grows larger all the time. In spite of all the British war materiel and financial assistance to the monarchist fascists, we grow stronger. And now comes Wall Street with aid to the bankrupt English. Let the Truman clique wake up and think. The Greek people will not be bowed down by any foreign threats. We will continue the struggle until we win complete independence. The only thing your Truman can do is supply the guerrillas with American war materiel which up to this time they were getting from the English. I mean that it will be the war booty captured on the battlefield between the guerrillas and the monarchist fascists.

I have nothing else to say. I salute you all.

D. A.

Athens.

Correction

To New Masses: In my final comments on the philosophy of John Dewey in the May 13 NM, there occurred a typographical error which, though seemingly slight, would create difficulties for those familiar with Dewey's philosophy in its technical aspects. I said that Dewey "converts the question as to whether a planet or the sun exists prior to our knowing them into whether we can know the sun without first *having* it as a gob of light in non-cognitive experience." As printed, *having* became *knowing*, which rendered the sentence meaningless, especially since in Dewey's thought the distinction of "having" something in immediate non-cognitive experience and "knowing" anything is quite basic.

Howard Selsam.

New York.

Another Charles Abrams

To New Masses: Would you please make clear in your columns that the Charles Abrams who is author of the article "Palestine: Act II" in your magazine (May 20, 1947) is not the same Charles Abrams who wrote the article on housing in *The Nation* (May 17, 1947), the latter being also the author of the recent book *The Future of Housing*. Your Charles Abrams and I have such conflicting viewpoints that I am sure that neither he nor I will want our publics to be confused by our respective views as well as by our identities.

Charles Abrams.

New York.

New Zealand Nosegay

To New Masses: Or should I say, to a breath of cool air on a stifling day? Because that is what you represent to me. Here, in tiny New Zealand, we have our own Marxist publications. But while they are excellent in content, they are in form a trifle dry. Perhaps an apt simile would be a good nutritious meal unattractively served.

NM, in my opinion, has everything. It is readable. It is exciting. It is life. What is most important to a non-American, NM helps to preserve a sense of balance when viewing the American scene. When one has been subjected to a constant spate of Hollywoodian distortions for years this is very necessary. By the way, loud handclaps to Joseph Foster for his splendid article on the Hollywood imperialists. I await the next shipment of New Masses with eagerness.

A. W. Bagley.

PS—If any of your readers, especially those of the Negro people, would care to correspond with me, my address is 3 Adams Terrace, Wellington C2, New Zealand.

A. W. B.

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DEADLINE FOR ACTION

Speedup to rush Eugene Dennis to jail is now the strategy of the Un-American Committee. A letter to NM readers from

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

IN MARCH the self-styled "Committee on Un-American Activities" was holding "hearings" on two bills to outlaw the Communist Party—fathered by Congressmen Rankin and Sheppard. It was to be a nice cozy affair among friends, with no Communists allowed. Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party, challenged this procedure. Who had a better right to be heard on such a subject than the Communist Party? He apparently won his point on March 26. Dennis came to testify as a voluntary witness before the Un-American Committee, as it is popularly and correctly designated. From the moment of his appearance it was evident that he was to be a special target of attack by this outfit, to be silenced by any means. He was not permitted to testify under the name of Eugene Dennis and was escorted from the hearing room by police. He had prepared a magnificent statement on "the inalienable right of Americans to be Communists." The refusal of the committee members to listen to the statement made it the subject of publicity and discussion on a national scale. Their attempt at suppression defeated itself. Their two bills lie in the discard today, thanks in good measure to the bold and vigorous attack upon them by Eugene Dennis.

The next event, leading up to his present indictment for contempt—a feeling shared by thousands of Americans—occurred on April 9, when Dennis declined to appear at a meeting of the committee. He sent a second statement, delivered by an attorney, in which he challenged the authority of this committee as being unlawful and unconstitutional, as having no right to subpoena witnesses, as usurping police power, as interfering in elections and union activities. He charged it is contrary to law as to its composition, including as it does Rep. Rankin, who was not lawfully seated as a member of the House of Representatives. He called attention in support of this last point to the fact that 550,000 eligible Negro voters of Mississippi remained away from the polls under threats of murder, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. This second ringing challenge by Dennis to the Un-American Committee literally made them see red. Rankin bellowed that the lawyer should be held in contempt and asserted: "This committee is the Grand Jury of America." The committee voted unanimously that Dennis should be cited for contempt and demanded that he also be charged with conspiracy by the Department of Justice. They launched into a tirade against him that hit such an all-time low on personal affairs, even involving his dead mother and father, that it was generally ignored in the press of the country. But these were juicy morsels to this brutal fascist-like outfit.

On April 13 Dennis was indicted for contempt. The penalty is a year in jail and a $1,000 fine. His trial is set for June 16. Plans are under way for a three-ring circus in Washington, featuring the modern witch-hunt: the trials of Gerhart Eisler, German Communist, and George Marshall and Richard Morford of the Council for American-Soviet Friendship, are also set for about then. To top it off the Un-American Committee is to hold a hearing on "Hollywood Reds" the same day, featuring aging screen lovers of yesterday as their star fingermen. Motions for a postponement of the Dennis case will be argued on June 2. Goaded by the Un-American Committee, the Department of Justice is demanding unusual haste in setting Dennis' trial for six weeks after the indictment. Fair-minded Americans, who realize the importance of the issue raised by the Dennis case, namely, the illegality of the committee, will also realize that it requires sufficient time for attorneys to adequately prepare such a case, which will defend his refusal to appear, will expose this committee, and rally all who oppose it. To prevent a proper preparation and presentation of the case is to protect this committee from a searching exposure and to deny Dennis a fair trial. I ask every reader of NEW MASSES to protest now to the Department of Justice against any rushing of this important case. Write your views also to your Congressman.

The Un-American Committee has tried to make a great mystery of Dennis' name. The "mystery" was unraveled by Dennis at a mass meeting in New York on March 30. He was born and christened Francis Waldron, forty-two years ago in Seattle, Washington, and is of Irish and Norwegian extraction. He graduated from Franklin High School there in 1923 and was listed in the yearbook, according to the Seattle *Times*, as a crack debater, manager of the basketball team and the senior play. A former schoolmate described him as a "generally pleasant person," an excellent description of Gene. In the turbulent Thirties Dennis was active in California, arrested in free speech fights and unemployed demonstrations; he was involved in organizing the maritime workers, and in the tremendous struggle of the agricultural workers of the Imperial Valley. A striking veteran AFL member in California recalls Dennis in these earlier labor struggles as "a militant fighter." Dennis worked as an electrical worker, teamster, longshoreman, carpenter, lumber worker. He was an active unionist and became a Communist in his youth. He went to China and the Philippines in the Thirties to help the people's movement there. He volunteered to return to the Philippines when it was occupied by the Japanese. His offer was refused. He is an unassuming, hard-working, kind, gentle and very handsome man, who looks most unlike the Red-baiter's picture of Communists. Workers and all progressive Americans are coming to love Gene for the enemies he makes.

This attack on Eugene Dennis is another form of attack on the Communist Party, an attempt to harass and cripple the Party, to deprive it of an outstanding leader, an aggressive fighter, a valiant champion of the rights of the people. Where the frontal attack of the Un-American Committee failed, a flank attack is now contemplated. Speedup to rush Dennis into jail is their strategy. This makes immediate protest action all the more imperative.

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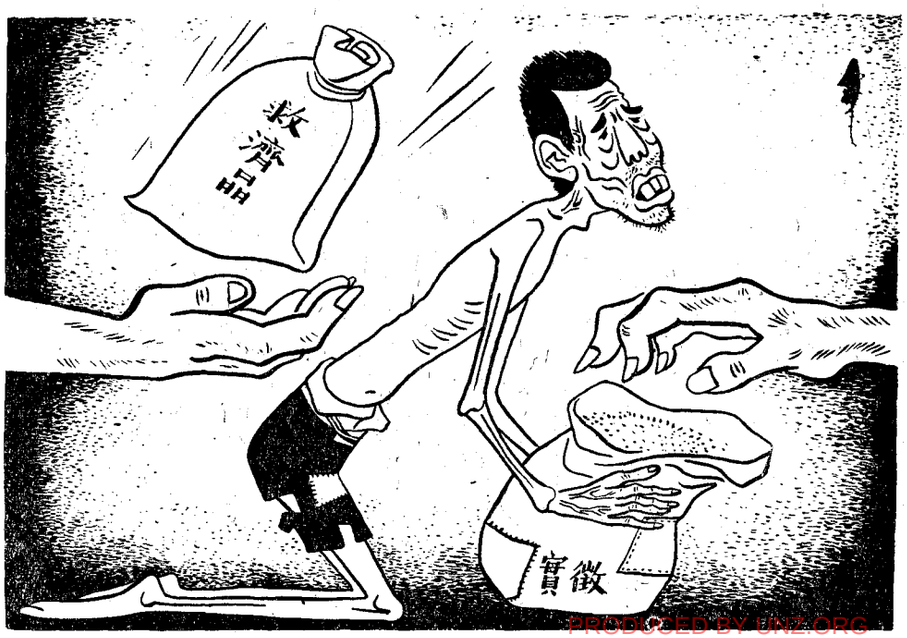
Two satires on monopoly by Liao Ping Hsinng. ABOVE: Paper trust to writer, "How come you haven't been writing lately?" BELOW: Utility magnate, "Damn fool! Don't search for light—here it is!"

BELOW: The Nanking regime taxes the poor man while stealing his UNRRA relief.—By Sheng Tung Heng.



Chiang Kai-shek's Civil War (the b

PEOPLE'S A

THE Chinese political cartoon served consistently as an instrum of progress. It helped mobilize people in the war against Japan, a today it has resumed the struggle, gun before the war, against the actionary Chiang Kai-shek gove ment.

In countries with a high degree illiteracy the cartoon is a weapon great power. This has been recogni by the Kuomintang regime, which subjected the artists to every kind political persecution, from impris ment to murder. The artists, on other hand, have become skilled avoiding legal technicalities put their way by the police, and in deve ing illegal methods of work. Neit poverty nor martyrdom have stop them in their unceasing fight for material and cultural welfare of people of their country.

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bowls symbolize starvation).—By Tao Mou Chi.

ISTS OF CHINA

THE chief foreign influences on Chinese cartooning have been the works of Goya and Daumier, and later, Kaethe Kollwitz, David Low, William Gropper and certain Soviet artists. During the war, when the cartoonists left the cities and went into the back country, these influences were increasingly integrated into a true national style based on the old Chinese line drawing and folk art.

Peasants in China's villages have always bought drawings for their festivals, pasting them on the doors of their houses for decoration and as good luck amulets. These "door god" prints are colorful and striking, though sometimes crude in design. When the cartoonists took over the technique the gods were deposed and contemporary popular heroes and villains took their places — awakened peasants, anti-fascist soldiers, enemies, corrupt officials, quislings and landlords. The most striking and developed work in this genre was in the liberated areas, where it became a true mass medium.

As Sheng Tung Heng sees Kuomintang "reorganization."

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THE RED-COATS ARE COMING!

Our movie-land Minute Men prime their muskets. A discussion of British films.

By JOSEPH FOSTER

THE rising popularity of British films in America is fertilizing a new crop of ulcers among Hollywood producers. Before James Mason came to dwell among us (in person), he was beginning to replace Stalin as The Man to Be Watched. Mere mention of British films in many of our studios has caused the air to go blue with battle smoke. This feeling has been smoldering for some time, but when the film critics, in a mood of seeming treason, included almost as many British as American films in the Ten Best lists, then the fires really began to rage. Sir Stafford Cripps, president of the British Board of Trade, added an inflammatory bag of fuel by his attack, several months ago, on our film industry. Hollywood, he complained, has been taking huge gobs of money out of the Empire through box-office receipts and high American film rental charges, while at the same time permitting only a trickle of British pictures to play the States. To balance this situation, he proposed a stiff tax on this money. Now to so tax American films in any foreign market is plainly the work of Communists who apparently have infiltrated Cripps. To the blowing of bugles, our boys quickly formed ranks for the counter-charge. We are not only fighting British film companies but the whole British Empire, Frank Capra wrathfully explained. Where, he bawled, was the State Department?

As the dollar is the cause of such injured national pride, the concern of West Coast producers is not unjustified. Outstripped only by the Italian *Open City*, British films have been establishing record runs. The only American competitor in longevity has been *The Best Years of Our Lives*. It is felt that if the British films were given the same distribution as American films, they would run away with the box-office. The fact that American film business has dropped off twenty to twenty-five percent in the domestic market is not calculated to ease matters.

This comparative success of British movies is based upon qualities that our own films sadly lack. These qualities include a recognition of social realities, plausible characters, dialogue that sounds natural, and plot developments that are not distorted beyond the comprehensions of normal experience. Where we get a *Lost Horizon* compounded of schoolboy dreams, they give us *They Came to a City*, which also deals with the ideal dwelling place of the future. Instead of the infantile *My Reputation*, they make *Brief Encounter*. *Tennessee Johnson*, *Santa Fe Trail* or *Gone With the Wind* are matched by the British *Thunder Rock*, which argues for the responsibility of men and women to their historic obligations. For our *Ninotchka*, they offer *Adventure for Two*; for *Spellbound*, *The Seventh Veil*; *Notorious Gentleman* for *Razor's Edge* and *This Happy Breed* in place of *White Cliffs of Dover*. This list can stretch for another page, but I think the point is made. It does not necessarily follow, of course, that all of the British films mentioned are the kind a Marxist would settle for or even accept. Many of these films are as much the instruments of British ruling-class propaganda as our own films are for the status quo of American social and political life. I will go into that point shortly. But they contain the elements that make British films interesting, make them films that can be discussed above the kindergarten level.

British films are in many ways technically inferior to ours, although *Colonel Blimp*, *Henry V*, *Stairway to Heaven* and *Odd Man Out* indicate that the British are able to apply technical skills equal to any. But one of the main accomplishments of the British film makers is the film of ideas. Sometimes these ideas are explored for their own sake, as in *Thunder Rock* and *They Came to a City*. But more often they are dealt with for the purpose of neutralizing the social influence of progressive ideas, as in *Love on the Dole* and *Adventure for Two*, and sometimes in a more direct way to plead for the status quo—as in *Stairway to Heaven* and *This Happy Breed*. Frequently these films are crudely lighted, slow-paced, dramatically uninventive, talky, more dependent upon stage than upon film techniques. Yet even with these handicaps, they remain the work of adult men.

WHY is this? To begin with, the traditional respect for the national literature from Shakespeare to E. M. Forster touches even the film producers. This engenders a respect for the fashioners of literature, the writers, thus permitting greater freedom with regard to style, taste and the presentation of ideas. Furthermore their national thinking, qualified by concepts of aristocracy and traditional class privileges, discourages such delusions as the errand-boy-to-oil-king myth. The romantic success story, designed to keep everybody happy and hoping, like a lottery ticket, the vulgarized and distorted promise of the democratic life, does not therefore become the pattern of movie reality. An Ernest Bevin does not get to be Foreign Minister through some social abracadabra, but only through the efforts of an organized working class. This Britishers know; their films point up the fact that political ideas in England are popularly on a higher and wider level. This may sound like a contradiction to the above-mentioned reverence for tradition, but I am attempting no study in the complexities of British character. It is a fact that both these characteristics appear side by side in the British citizen.

It is a further fact that English university curricula recognize Marxism as one of the established philosophic systems. Together with this academic

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acceptance, there also flourish Marxist study clubs, addressed by Marxists active in the practical political field. Contrast these activities with the scholastic state of affairs in our own country, where it is getting to be safer for a student or a teacher to hurl a stink-bomb into the president's office than be caught in the open with a copy of the *Communist Manifesto*, or even the *New Republic*. The voters of the smallest hamlet are no longer frightened by the word socialism, since Labor Party candidates have been elected from all parts of England.

Fortunate, too, are the film producers who are free of a production code, a Legion of Decency, racist regional bigotries, and all the censors, self-appointed moralists and ethical guardians that hamstring the better efforts of US movie-makers.

Thus it is possible for the British to produce a film like *They Came to a City*, where the values of the socialist future are carefully examined and eloquently recommended. The problem of the British ruling class does not lie in the suppression of the socialist idea, as with us, but in weakening its drive, heading it off, comparing it unfavorably with the current brand of bourgeois democracy that obtains in the tight little isle. This is reflected in a film like *Love on the Dole*. Depression England was straining and cracking under the weight of its unsolved social problems. Poverty, misery, unemployment, unrest touched almost every worker. The dole was the miserable attempt to help shore up the economic structure. Under these conditions socialism had a strong appeal for the people. It would have been unutterably stupid to deny this fact. Thus the film admits that the miseries are man-made: and what man has made man can unmake. But then the film sets out to dampen any militant action that might result from the socialist ferment. This is done by pointing out that socialism, which is good, can only be achieved under the nice rules set down by the bourgeoise. Have your mass demonstrations, but *please* keep off the grass. Failure to obey these polite injunctions leads, in the film, to a division among the workers, a bloody fracas with the police (those hard-working civil servants who have their orders), the death of the labor organizer, and the career of prostitute as the only way out for his sweetheart.

Films like *Adventure For Two* admit the popularity of communism among British workers, and its merits as a practical economic system, but argue that the system that presently blesses the British is just as good. The main character, played by Laurence Olivier, is a marine engineer member of a Soviet wartime mission in England. He marries a British shipbuilder's daughter, an act that maneuvers the Soviet citizen into a position where he can be harangued on the virtues of British capitalist society. The shipbuilder points to the essential democracy of the British ruling class (a Communist is taken into his very home). He dwells on the freedom of the English worker, who can join a trade union, enjoy the secret ballot, elect his own representatives. John Bull is a clumsy good-natured blimp, but when the chips are down he is in there making with the democratic gestures. The Soviet system may be fine, but so is the British system, so why change? The representative of British big business is played by Felix Aylmen, a sweet, considerate man, to whom it would be impossible to impute all the wicked tales told about British imperialism. Nevertheless the Soviet citizen wants to know about it.

Imperialism turns out to be only a technique for bringing enlightenment to the unfortunate inhabitants of the outer darkness. If a guinea or two is made in the process, well, who's against money? During the war, when Churchill was willy-nilly a democrat, such throat-clearings went unchallenged; today, the unsavory operations of Albion's lion in India, Palestine, Iraq, Greece and wherever else he rests his ponderous paw make it a little tough to sell imperialism as a beneficent influence. British movie producers had to find a new device and they fashion a canny one in *Stairway to Heaven*. A flyer with a serious head wound hovers between sanity and hallucination. His battle to remain alive is represented on one level by a surgical operation, and on another by a series of arguments with the Heavenly Hosts to be permitted to remain on earth. If he can win his astral case—that is, if his operation is successful—he will be allowed to remain. The cards in heaven are stacked against him. Who should be the prosecuting attorney for the angels but an American colonial soldier, the first to die in the War for Independence? To him, naturally, all Englishmen are tyrants, so he has no use for any of them, including our man. When the claim is made that the English of today are different from the English of King George the Third's day, the American triumphantly points to the jury composed of a Dutchman (The Boer War), a Russian (The Crimean adventure), an African Negro, an Irishman and other victims of British colonial oppression. What about imperialism now? Here the film cuts back to the operating room. The bellows attached to the boy's mouth are scarcely moving. He appears to be losing his case.

But the producers are still in there pitching. Our hero's lawyer, a bluff, man-of-the-people country type, asks for a jury of *contemporary* Americans to judge his case. At fast as you can say lap dissolve, the Irishman becomes a New York cop, the Dutchman a gardener, the Russian a cab driver, the Negro a capped and overalled worker, and so on until all are transformed into familiar American types. Thus the British are composed of the same minorities as the Americans. How like one another are the two countries! So the original point of the film—that the English, like the Americans, are animated by democratic impulses—is established. Imperialism? Just a simple minorities problem, and every nation is composed of minorities, even the Russians. The jury gives the lad its benediction, and a moment later he climbs down from the operating table, steady as the American Treasury.

THE sound principles that the British employ in their straight propaganda films are used to fine advantage in productions dealing with the themes of relatively personal relations and issues, such as *Brief Encounter*, *Notorious Gentleman*, the first half of *Vacation from Marriage* and some of the early Mason films like *I Met a Murderer*. In films such as these, their superior qualities become apparent. They eschew glamor when it is alien to the theme. Cecelia Johnson, the middle-aged, small-town, fading woman of *Brief Encounter*, making a last stab for some glamor in life as she faces the approaching autumn of her existence, is one of the truest characters ever put on the screen, down to her one hat and two coats. In the same situation, Hollywood would have cast a Claudette Colbert or an Irene Rich, full of mellow charm and bundles of money and a wardrobe to outfit an entire British town.

Once the character appears true, all

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other qualities must follow as links in a chain. True character must, by definition, involve believable dialogue, plausible behavior, recognizable worries, realistic relationships and backgrounds.

If any one of these is untrue, then everything in the film tends to become unbelievable. This is a fact that the film producers of England appear to have grasped, and one which we are several country miles away from.

However, the British should not celebrate their comparative maturity too quickly. The desire for a full distribution of their films in this country could easily lead their film-makers to produce a brand of pabulum the equal of our own.

This is how such a thing could happen.

J. Arthur Rank, who owns better than sixty percent of the British film industry, recently make a picture called *Fanny by Gaslight*. It deals with a little girl brought up in a house of prostitution and her conditioning by such an environment. Martin Quigley, prominent lay Catholic, publisher of film trade papers, co-author of the film code of morals, and the Roman Catholic hierarchy's watchdog over the moral and political content of our films, saw a print of this picture. He denounced it at once. He then took it upon himself to speak for film exhibitors and the people of the country —all the people. He informed Mr. Rank that we in America do not tolerate this type of film, and that if Rank wants his films distributed in this country he might do worse than study the production code governing the Hollywood factories. Rank replied that he was willing to discuss the matter. Soon after, the self-appointed regulator of our tastes set sail for England. There is no proof that he went solely to see Rank, but the story went the rounds that Quigley and Rank talked the matter over at great length. The question of British film quotas for American consumption and allied subjects comes up soon, and who can tell? Adherence to our Production Code might be rewarded by somewhat larger distribution.

If that should happen, British films would rapidly become indistinguishable from our own brand of home-cooking and Hollywood could stop worrying about British competition — for there would no longer be any reason to prefer British films to American.

PALESTINE: A SOLUTION

How the obstacles that stand in the way can be overcome by the Soviet proposals.

By CHARLES S. ABRAMS

THE finale of the special Palestine session of the United Nations Assembly did not warm the heart of the British colonial bureaucrats or of the architects of the Truman Doctrine. Things had not quite worked out as they had planned.

On the major questions that had come up for decision the votes had gone the way the Anglo-American bloc wanted them to go. The terms of reference for the UN investigating commission do not include any mention of Palestine independence. The composition of the commission leaves the door open for all sorts of Anglo-American maneuvers. What a travesty of justice it is for the Netherlands—which has been waging war against the independence of the 55,000,000 inhabitants of the Indonesian Republic—to hold a seat as a "neutral" member of a committee inquiring into a colonial question. But Warren Austin's stubborn fight against the inclusion of the permanent members of the Security Council on the commission was not motivated by considerations of justice or neutrality. The objectives were to bar the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and to avoid any assumption of responsibility by the US for a solution of the Palestine question. And Austin won this point.

But something bigger than the election of another fact-finding commission was achieved at this session. The basis for the just solution of the problem of Palestine was dramatically placed before world public opinion. This of course was not on the agenda that Britain and America had so carefully prepared for the Assembly. But Great Britain and the United States are not the only members of the United Nations. After Andrei Gromyko finished his address at the closing session of the UN the formal victories of the Anglo-American bloc looked small indeed. The formal victories could not obscure the imperialism on which the Anglo-American position rested. The Anglo-American attempt to use the UN session as a mere delaying tactic—under cover of which they would continue to jockey for Middle Eastern hegemony, for oil and bases — had sustained a sound moral defeat.

Gromyko's speech has already evoked an international response comparable, under new circumstances, to Litvinov's "collective security" speech in the defunct League of Nations. It gave this UN session an entirely new significance, as all objective observers admit. The Republican New York *Herald Tribune*, for example, pointed out editorially: "Undoubtedly, the most important single development of the special session was Mr. Gromyko's address. . . . This Russian declaration opened for the first time the possibility of an all-around and roughly equitable solution." Although there is much room for disagreement with the rest of the *Herald Tribune's* comment and with other interpretations that have been read into the Gromyko speech, the decisive thing is that the position enunciated by the Soviet Union provides a practical basis for untangling the Palestine knot. If the problems of Palestine are to be solved many people will have to depart from pet formulas and slogans. The great challenge of

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the Gromyko speech and the practical manner in which it has placed within reach a solution of the Palestine problem lies in its thorough grappling with fundamental realities.

IN ESSENCE the problem of Palestine is a colonial problem—a colonial problem with its own specific complexities and peculiarities. Geographically and strategically Palestine lies at the point where Asia, Africa and Europe converge. It lies in the heart of the rich Middle-Eastern oil fields. Between World War I and World War II it has been developed into the decisive strategic base of Great Britain in the Mediterranean. British policy in Palestine has been dictated by imperial strategy, the pursuit of oil and the cultivation of commercial advantage. In this primary sense the problem of Palestine is no different from the problems of any other colony. British colonial rule in Palestine has been typified by the absence of democracy, by brutality and terror, a conscious cultivation of enmity between the peoples who inhabit the country, and support for the most reactionary forces in both the Arab and Jewish communities as the best props for continued imperialist domination. A solution of the problem of Palestine within an imperialist framework is a contradiction in terms. The root problem of Palestine is: imperialism. Its woes and agonies, its trials and tribulations during the past decades are all the fruit of foreign rule. There is no magic formula that can bring peace, security and the termination of conflicts in Palestine outside the framework of the colonial problem as a whole: freedom from imperialist rule.

In addition Palestine is linked to the aspirations and problems of important sections of the Jewish people. The Jewish community in Palestine today numbers 600,000. It has deep roots in Palestine and aspires for the realization of its national rights. Any attempt to ignore or evade the rights of the Jews in Palestine would not only be unjust but would fail to afford a solution.

At the same time a solution for Palestine cannot ignore or evade the fact that there is a large Arab population, comprised chiefly of peasants and workers, aspiring for an end to semi-feudal bondage and the democratic realization of its national rights.

Imperialism has traditionally pitted Arab against Jew and Jew against Arab in order to betray both peoples and perpetuate imperial rule. The significance of Gromyko's speech lies in the fact that it did not evade or ignore any of the complexities of the Palestine question and at the same time set forward a practical plan for resolving the difficulties within a framework that provides full protection for the national development, national aspirations and desire for self-government of both peoples. The current effort to twist the speech into the old formulas based upon the imperialist pitting of one people against another only turns the clock back. Gromyko's speech was neither pro-Zionist nor anti-Zionist, but sought peace and cooperation between the Jews and the Arabs.

The dominant Zionist leaders have

"Can you still see Harry Truman?"

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sought to channelize the national aspirations of the Jews into the sterile rut of reliance on imperialism. Gromyko demonstrated that the true national aspirations of the Jews can best be satisfied through the movements for national liberation which are ascending with such intensity throughout the colonial world.

The Soviet delegate posed independence as the key problem—explaining that neither an independent Arab state, ignoring the lawful rights of the Jewish people, nor an independent Jewish state, ignoring the lawful rights of the Arab population, are tenable. The solution he emphasized was "a single Arab-Jewish state with equal rights for Jews and Arabs," within which cooperation between the two peoples, for their mutual advantage, can be developed. He also suggested an alternative, a less desirable solution, in the event that relations between the Jews and the Arabs deteriorate to such an extent that a democratic Arab-Jewish state becomes untenable: two independent states, one Jewish and one Arab. The headline writers immediately asserted that Gromyko favored partition. In reality Gromyko's alternative proposal bears no similarity to any of the past partition proposals, all of which have been based upon the continuance of British rule and sovereignty over Palestine. The key to Gromyko's approach, in both instances, is independence.

AFTER watching the conduct of the representatives of the Arab Higher Committee at Lake Success, and after hearing their distinctly anti-Semitic utterances, many question the possibility of cooperation between the Jews and the Arabs. But it should be borne in mind that the reactionary Axis-tainted Arab leaders, who represent the Mufti's coterie, are British imperialism's contribution to the world. Great Britain has consistently worked with and supported the most reactionary top crust of Arab feudal lords. They are not the true representatives of the Arab masses in Palestine. At least two Arabian newspapers in Palestine expressed strong opposition to the representation of the Arab Higher Committee. *Al-Ittachad* wrote: "We refuse to recognize the Arab Higher Executive because it cannot and will not express the will of the Arab public. We reject its political methods, which deny elementary rights to the people." *Al Shaab* wrote: "The Higher Executive has never been elected and has no democratic basis." Most significant is the report that 13,000 Palestinian Arabs wrote letters to the Arab Higher Committee protesting its appointment and demanding election of Arab representatives.

These are the Arab forces with whom cooperation is both possible and necessary. The joint Jewish-Arab strike of British army and government employes in Palestine, which occurred right after the UN session ended, is further demonstrable proof of the practical possibilities of Jewish-Arab cooperation based on the common interests of both peoples. Within the Jewish community there have long been advocates of Jewish-Arab cooperation. In addition to the Communist Party of Palestine there is Dr. Judah L. Magnes' Ichud group and the Hashomer Hatzair party. These groups are among the best known supporters of Jewish-Arab cooperation notwithstanding differences on many other political questions. And the chauvinism of the Arab and Jewish extremists alike are among the factors that have to be combatted if a solution is to be achieved.

The decisive obstacle to a solution in Palestine, however, is American imperialism. The close teamwork between the American and British representatives in the UN Assembly should not obscure the fundamental fact that the Middle East is the scene of acute Anglo-American rivalry. American control of the British Empire is one of the prominent objectives of the "American Century" expansionism embodied in the Truman Doctrine. In the Far East and Pacific the United States has already far outstripped Great Britain as the dominant imperialist power and is now driving to outstrip the British in the Middle East. America has emerged from recent battles over oil with a monopoly of Saudi Arabia's rich oil reserves and vastly extended rights and interests in the British sphere. The Greco-Turkish subsidy and the expanded American grip on the Middle East oil belt consolidate American imperialism for further assaults on Britain's weakened positions—positions not limited to the Mediterranean but extending to the heart of the Empire, to India itself. This rivalry is a factor in the evolution of US-British relations in the Middle East and has been reflected in the sharp verbal tilts between Foreign Minister Bevin and President Truman on the question of Palestine, and the inability of the British and American governments to agree on the implementation of the proposals of the Anglo-American Commission on Palestine which they had jointly set up.

In addition, while American imperialism persistently drives to reduce Britain to an increasingly subordinate position, it wants to preserve the British colonial system and utilize British manpower and administrative machinery for the defense of oil and imperial interests. Thus, hand in hand with the Anglo-American rivalry, we witness the studied American efforts to defend and uphold the British colonial system under US hegemony.

The zigzags of US policy in Palestine are, in part, explained by this contradiction. Richard Crossman, the British Labor member of the Anglo-American Committee on Palestine, has the following to say in his book *Palestine Mission* about the American support recently rendered to Britain's departure from the commission's recommendation: "Why, then, did Mr. Byrnes give his approval in Paris to the Morrison Plan? [A partitioned Palestine under federal British rule.] The answer was clear. Deeply embarrassed by the ineptitude of President Truman's first statement on our committee's report, he realized the importance to America of a joint Anglo-American policy in the Middle East, designed to safeguard the oil fields against Russian expansion. Looked at from Paris, where the American-Russian deadlock overshadowed all other issues, the fact of agreement was more important than the details to be agreed upon."

It is, of course, absurd in the face of the facts for Crossman to speak of "Russian expansion," but his remarks do indicate the excuse American imperialism uses in shoring up British colonialism.

The Anglo-American imperialists will not shrink into oblivion because of the moral defeat they have suffered in view of the Soviet's position on Palestine. They will only intensify their efforts to achieve their imperialist objectives. The decisive struggle is therefore, still ahead. Because of the special role of the United States, American public opinion has a special responsibility. Washington must continue to hear demands for a shift in American policy, for American support of a just solution of the Palestine crisis based on UN unity and American-Soviet collaboration.

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review and comment

THE SAGA OF AMERICAN LABOR

Philip Foner's inspiring history shows the working class as the architect of liberty.

By GEORGE SQUIER

HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES: From Colonial Times to the American Federation of Labor, *by Philip S. Foner. International.* $3.75.

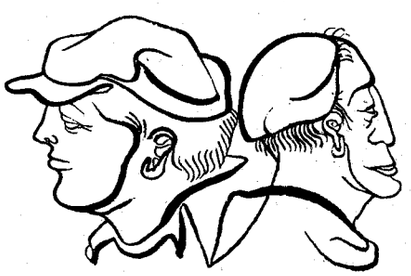
PHILIP FONER has made a great and lasting contribution to the American working-class movement in the writing of its history. Through his own painstaking research and study, he has illuminated the past and brought new light to the present. By its nature the book is a direct challenge to past "interpretations" of labor history. Foner gives the reader a clear picture of the constantly changing but never ending struggle of American workers since before the American Revolution.

Until the appearance of Foner's book there was no labor history that contested the approach put forth by John R. Commons and his associates and followers. Commons in effect took what Lenin termed "economism" (the tendency to separate economic from political issues and to disregard the latter) and sought to make it the basis for a theory of the history of the labor movement. This approach to labor history became a justification for every backward tendency in the AFL. At the same time it was used to attack any effort to transform the labor movement into a militant and aggressive force using both its economic and political power. Fortunately, the workers who organized the CIO never accepted this thesis.

Foner's book becomes a powerful ideological weapon in the fight against economist and other backward tendencies. It demonstrates that the American labor movement has struggled for a militant uncompromising program on its own behalf. From its inception it has been involved in political action to advance its class interest; it has struggled to be ideologically free from the employers through the establishment of a labor press and education. From the beginning the workers were developing a class consciousness which led them, however imperfectly, to seek an end to exploitation and the emancipation of the working class. Foner thus makes clear by the rich testimony of the workers and their leaders that it is the progressive elements in the CIO and AFL, Communist and non-Communist alike, who today uphold the great tradition of militant effort, political independence and class consciousness inherited from our past. Within this book is found the true spirit of the working class.

Much of Foner's material on the basis of the past struggles of the workers brings to mind the comment of the oldtimer who said: "Things ain't what they used to be; as a matter of fact, they never were." Most historians have stressed advantages of free land, free opportunity and high wages that a traditional scarcity of labor is presumed to have given to American workers from earliest times. Foner makes clear that these constituted a grand illusion, often fostered by employers or exploiters such as the Virginia Company, which issued a coin in 1630 reading:

In England land scarce and labor plenty,
In Virginia land free and labor scarce.



G. Morris.

Foner recalls in refutation the countless indentured servants, slaves of their masters for a period of years, who had to submit to torture and even death if they sought to act as free workers; the Irish workers "who worked under killing conditions on canals and turnpikes at wages ranging from fifty to eighty-seven cents a day"; the Lowell factory girls who were virtually the prisoners of the millowners and were paid a wage of two cents per hour; the untold numbers of men and women killed and wounded in the railroad strike of 1877, when they asked for a wage to give bread and shelter to their children. Foner's material drives home, time and again, the truth of Marx's statement that workers' wages have seldom been more than enough for bare subsistence. Poverty and insecurity have been the eternal companions of American workers from the beginning. And equally from the beginning they have fought for a united and militant labor movement.

No less important, in the light of today's events, has been the ever-present thread of political activity in the American labor movement. It is today's CIO-PAC, and not the policy of "rewarding friends and punishing enemies," which represents the American labor tradition. By the very nature of the struggles which they conducted against the employers the workers found it necessary to enter into political activity. This activity was part of their fight for their class. The battles with the police when scabs were brought in to take over textile workers' jobs in 1875; the fight against the court decisions that declared unions to be conspiracies; the battle for legislation to grant first the ten-hour day and later the eight-hour day; the legislative campaigns against anti-labor laws —these were all an integral part of the class struggles conducted by the unions.

Political activity was sporadic, at times organized into political parties, at other times confined to lobbies and demonstrations. But it was always present to some degree. Typical is the case of the struggle against an open-shop bill put forth in New York in 1864. This bill, entitled "An act to

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Punish Unlawful Interference with Employers and Employes," has a familiar enough ring today. It was met by a storm of protest throughout the state, with demonstrations in every major center. The response was summarized by a leather-lunged worker at one rally when he shouted: "We shall send them to hell next election." The legislators, convinced that the workers would indeed send them to hell, retreated and killed the bill.

NOTHING is more inspiring to read than the role played by the American workers in the struggles of the nation for its freedom, first from the British, later from the slave-owners. It is a special contribution of Foner's that he does not separate the history of labor from that of the nation as a whole. He does not push labor into a corner and divorce its struggles from those of the nation. Instead he demonstrates that the workers and their movement have been at all times an integral part of every major struggle. Starting with the artisans and mechanics who made up the great body of the Sons of Liberty at the time of the American Revolution, he traces the contributions of the "Patriotic Diggers" who built fortifications on Brooklyn Heights in the War of 1812, of the men and women workers who backed Jefferson against the Federalist reactionaries, of the working men who supported Jackson against Biddle and his bank. Of particular interest is Foner's picture of the relations of the free white workers and the Negro slaves. While some white workers were duped by fears aroused by the slave-owners, the workers saw generally that an end to slavery was essential to the well-being of workers everywhere. It was particularly the Marxists who were clearest and most vehement in their opposition to slavery.

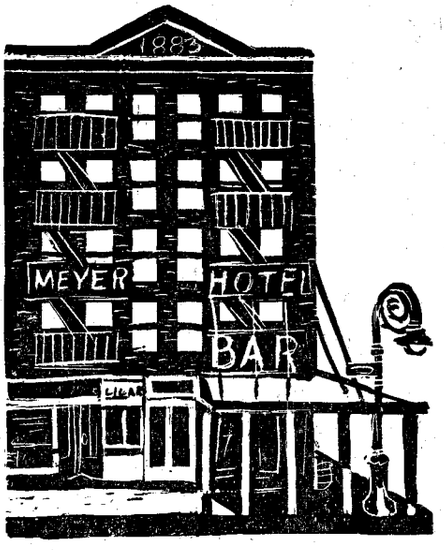
Foner's material on the growth and development of the unions after the Civil War shows most forcefully that the interests of the nation and of the labor movement are inseparable. The titanic struggles of the 1870's between a growing, powerful capitalism and a working class which was reaching out for unity with workers throughout the world, testing political strength and mobilizing its forces, show that from that time on every advance for the workers was an advance for the nation. The great obstacle for the whole people had become capitalism itself.

While Foner presents as fully as his space allows the contributions of important individual leaders such as Evans, Luther, Sylvis, Weydemeyer, Kate Mulaney, Meyers and many others, one of the most gratifying aspects of the book is the sense of the role of the workers as a class, of the thousands of men and women whose energies and sacrifice slowly and painfully built the labor movement. There was Elizabeth Haggerty, who in the fight for the ten-hour day in 1848 was arrested and sent to jail for fighting scabs: "We went to get the girls out; we went to get them out the best we could." Or Carroll, a member of the Mollie Maguires, who was hanged through the false testimony of the finger-man McParlan. Or the slave who sought to become a free worker and "swam every river from Tuscaloosa (Ala.) to Pennsylvania." Or the miners, defeated in their strike of 1875, who sang their bitter song:

Well, we've been beaten, beaten all to smash,
And now, sir, we've begun to feel the lash. . . .

If there is any weakness in the book, it lies not in the material itself but in its not containing sections directed explicitly at the errors and misinterpretations of Commons and others. While the material is strong enough to stand by itself, the polemical nature of the preface gives the impression that what is going to be presented will incorporate argued refutation of previous writings.

Not the least of the book's value lies in its numerous quotations, poems, songs and newspaper comments, which give the reader a sense of having been



part of the past struggles of labor Foner's style is simple and clear. Hi book should be read by everyone wh lays claim to understanding our pas and the American labor movement.

Statesman & Poet

RESIDENCE ON EARTH, *by Pablo Neruda. Translated by Angel Flores. New Directions.* $3.50.

PABLO NERUDA, who was born Nephtali Ricardo Reyes just after the turn of the century at Parral, in Chile, has been a power in the literature of South America and of the world since the publication of what Jorge Carrera Andrade calls "his great book," *Residencia en la Tierra*, from which the present collection takes its title. Nevertheless, it was not until the late war magnified interest in South America that translations of Neruda's work began to appear. During the past several years, four collections of his poems have been translated and published, the present volume being the most ambitious undertaking.

Neruda began writing poetry very young: he won a national prize at the age of sixteen. While in college—where, it is reported, he was a desultory student—he continued to write, and he carried the practice into the diplomatic career which he soon entered and which kept him in the Far East for a number of years.

Probably the most important period in Neruda's life, so far as his writing is concerned, at least, was that in which he held a diplomatic post in Republican Spain. He later resigned the post, in opposition to the policies of the conservative Chilean president of the time, but the experiences of the Spanish struggle opened up new areas to his verse. Like many poets of South America and Spain, Neruda had been strongly influenced by surrealism. The new poems, written out of the period in Spain, broadened his communication while at the same time taking over much of the exciting verbalism, the shocking imagery, of his earlier work.

Neruda's political development apparently continued in the direction it had taken in Spain. Stalingrad, during World War II, assumed for him the same emotional-political significance as Madrid had earlier. It was during the war that Neruda formally became a Communist. He is at present a Chilean senator, and was recently awarded Chile's National Prize. All in all, Neruda is a remarkable combination of

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nan of action and poet, a type no onger common in the literary world. More remarkable still is his poetry.

Residence on Earth brings together a sizable number of poems written between 1925 and the present. Students of Neruda may raise objections on the basis of specific omissions, but for the general reader the poems, culled from several books ranging from the early *Residencia* to the work-in-progress, the *General Song of Chile*, are a big enough collection to give the feel of the whole body of Neruda's work. For most readers his best known poems are probably those from *Spain in the Heart*, a group written during the Spanish Civil War, the finest of which is perhaps "The International Brigade Arrives at Madrid":

The morning of a cold month,
of an agonizing month, soiled by
mud and by smoke,
a month without knees, a sad
month of siege and misfortune,
when across the wet window-
panes of my house the African
jackals were heard
howling with their rifles and
their teeth full of blood, then,
—I saw with these eyes that I
have, with this heart that sees,
I saw the arrival of the staunch
ones, the towering soldiers
of the thin and hard and ripe and
ardent brigade of stone.

This poem may be taken as one of the poles of the method used as well as of the experience dramatized in this book. Clustered around it, or arrayed along the lines of force, are the other poems on Spain, the Stalingrad poems, the "Brief Oratorio at the Death of Silvestre Revueltas." Many of these poems are definitely political, and in any case they are dominated by ideas to a greater extent than are the others. The method here is simple and direct, the structure of these poems being grounded in statement rather than symbol. The danger in this method, which is that the statement becomes abstract and finally tyrannizes over the poem, reducing it to sentimentality or hysterical vulgarity, is avoided by what seems even in translation a sure control of tone and by a steady translation of public ideas into personal experience.

The section quoted may be taken as a case in point. To some readers "month without knees" may seem a little unlikely, at best. As an example of the pathetic fallacy it is a large part of the surrealist's stock-in-trade, and while Neruda is by no means a pure surrealist (and therefore probably not a surrealist at all) this kind of metaphor is the norm in his verse and most of the poems are built up out of similar irrational figures. But here the metaphor has an easily referable context and works perfectly. I take it to mean three things. In the first place it suggests the figure of a cripple, an amputee; and in a sense the time, and Spain, were crippled, "cut off at the knee" in that period. To be without knees is to be, in a figurative sense, incapable of prayer, a condition which the poem suggests more fully as it develops: "for hope we had only a dream of gunpowder." Finally I think there may be here an oblique reference to the slogan of Pasionaria, and if this is the case we have a certain amount of conflict between the attitudes at the second and third levels. Even if we were to discard these readings, the metaphor would still work in that it would help to establish the general tone which Neruda is trying to create and to round out the "situation," which helps to dramatize his experience. This kind of metaphor occurs with the greatest frequency in the earlier poems, poems which represent the other pole of Neruda's work. While it would be wrong to speak of them as surrealist in conception, the problems they present are similar to those posed by surrealist poems. They might seem on first consideration to be "all on the surface," without any real structure or development, as if they had been written for the value of the language alone, like sophisticated versions of children's playsongs:

The pigeon is filled with fallen
papers,
its breast is stained by rubbers
and weeks,
by blotters more white than a
cadaver
and inks afraid of its sinister
color.

Since in this poem Neruda is dealing with a favorite theme, at its broadest that of the brutalizing affect of the contemporary world, we may take the pigeon as a symbol of natural goodness but it will not help us much toward breaking down the passage. This tendency to resist paraphrase is a quality of a good poem, but sometimes the resistance is not due to com-

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plexity but to imprecision, inadequate structural organization or an ordering of images wherein logical or emotional connectives are not supplied. The latter is one of the sources of the private quality of surrealist verse and it weakens some of the poems here. Neruda, aside from the shock quality of his images, is working close to the French symbolist tradition, and the attempt to communicate tenuous emotional states through this kind of irrational imagery sometimes breaks down. Generally though, as with Lorca, in spite of the daring and frequently irrelevant imagery, the poems come through with clarity and power. When they fail, they can still be read for the delight in language alone.

There are other poems, notably the ode to Lorca, "Hymn and Return," and "A Song for Bolivar," which work toward a synthesis of the two polar tendencies. These poems unite the electric quality of imagery with explicit and valuable themes and add structural qualities through the use of symbols. I think they are the finest poems in what is one of the most important books to be published in some time.

THOMAS MCGRATH.

Technicolor Lava

UNDER THE VOLCANO, *by Malcolm Lowry. Reynal & Hitchcock.* $3.

SINCE I can't see anything in *Under the Volcano* other than an ill-conceived and badly-written novel, it is only fair to tell you that Mr. Alfred Kazin thinks it "belongs with the most original and creative novels of our time" and Mr. Stephen Spender says it is the most interesting novel he has read "since Lawrence and Joyce." The only explanation I can find for such misjudgments is that some literati, while capable of spotting bad writing on a wood-pulp level, are suckers for bad writing that models itself upon Proust and Joyce.

It is "modern" writing in the sense that people didn't write like this in the past century, but it is an academic modernism, for one can be as academic in following Joyce as in following Longfellow. Joyce and Proust wrote of a wealth of human beings and a sweep of social history. Their styles were fashioned to probe the new areas of experience, inner and outer, which their stories called up. Lowry has a headful of stylistic tricks, but the shining quality of Joyce and Proust—originality—is precisely what he lacks. I can think of no phrase, image, though or characterization in this book that conveys a fresh perception of life. Its general tone, in fact, is of experiences and people taken from literature rather than from life. His play with language seems to come out of a need to give his work a complexity, through its style, which it lacks in its content or people. He constantly telescopes time, writing of today, tomorrow, yesterday and a year ago in one sentence. There is never a straight passage of conversation. Conversations are two at once, like a badly-tuned radio, or else with each remark and ejaculation separated from the next by a scenic description full of symbols. Stream of consciousness is the favorite narrative method, but with a bewildering montage resembling no possible consciousness, and never attaining the sensitivity of word it has in the hands of an artist. Every noun is surrounded by adjectives, invariably violent. Things are not blue but cobalt, not red but mercurochrome, always burning, twisting, exploding, crashing, full of portents of doom. Even the Mexican setting seems to have no other purpose than to provide a garish scenic backdrop, and to enable the author to increase the turgidity of his style with handfuls of Spanish. The Mexican people are described with the attitude of a slumming tourist.

The story itself, but for its end, could have taken place on a Somerset Maugham South Sea Island. It deals with an Englishman drinking himself to death, while beating off the efforts of his beautiful ex-wife and idealistic half-brother to save him. The end comprises a thunderstorm, shots in the dark, mutterings about a fascist underground, and a body tossed into a ravine. There are also throughout sad, knowing, nostalgic and invariably unilluminating references to Mozart, the Ebro, Christ, the Rig Veda, Marx, Juarez, Maximilian and Carlotta. The author seems to feel that simply by mentioning such names frequently enough his book will take on an intellectual tone, just as he seems to think that by repeating an image throughout the book—a ferris wheel, a corpse, a flock of butterflies—it will magically take on a symbolic character, though it is unrelated to the story. It is often the case in contemporary art that difficulties in finding meaning are due to the fact that there is no meaning to be found, and of such vacancy this book is a prominent example. In fact, its quality of re

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:mbling literature and yet never be-oming literature might be called ›mething of a feat.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

Stone in Pond

LORD WEARY'S CASTLE, *by Robert Lowell. Harcourt, Brace.* $2.50.

THE text from which Robert Lowell has chosen the title of his book is one which can be taken in several ways. It comes from an old ballad:

It's Lambkin was a mason good
As ever built wi' stane:
He built Lord Wearie's castle
But payment gat he nane . . .

What this means to Lowell one cannot be certain; but to his reader it may suggest more than one of his purposes. Taken in the most obvious sense, it would seem to remark with a note of rather wry irony on the thanklessness of the poet's task—of any poet's task in a culture whose one real standard of value is money, which no poet can have much hope of getting for his poetry, no matter how good. But then, too, remembering something about a voice in the wilderness, one may be reminded of the old saw: "A prophet is not without honor except—" and so forth. And then, also, what is the significance of the very name "Lord Weary?"

But of course it is just with such a variety of meanings, widening in successive circles from the first impact, as ripples from a stone thrown in a pond, that a good modern poet works; and Lowell is a very good modern poet: few young poets begin their careers with quite so good a book as this.

The meanings may seem even to contradict one another in the most paradoxical way. Take the image of the prophet crying in the wilderness: it is one which fits very well a poet from whose work ring so many overtones of Old Testament indignation against the evils of the land. "The flies, the flies, the flies of Babylon/ Buzz in my ear-drums. . . ." Lowell writes, thinking of "this planned Babel of Boston where our money talks/ And multiplies the darkness of a land. . . ." And yet, paradoxically, this latter-day prophet is quite free of the traditional Jeremiah's pretentious solemnity: he can cry his condemnations with an almost unfailingly light, and sometimes even playful, touch. Or consider another contradiction: here we have a New Englander

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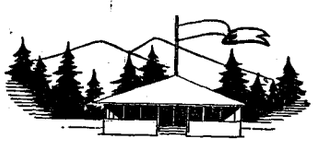

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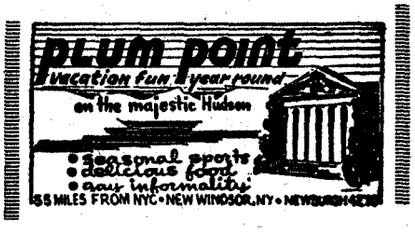
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(the name Lowell means something in New England history—and in New England poetry), recognizable on sight by his rather angular gestures, his somewhat forbidding reserve and more-or-less rock-bound integrity—all those characteristically Puritan virtues; and yet we have also a converted Catholic, whose vision would be that of a European man, nurtured in an altogether more sensual-minded and courtly society—would be, if it did not retain its Puritan cast, as it does.

Or another contradiction yet: the contradiction between Lowell's form, which reveals an amazingly accomplished mastery of traditional meters and stanza schemes, and his content, which is not only modern, but even startlingly so (for one of his most extraordinary gifts is his ability to work with the most uncompromising materials—even such stuff as juke-boxes and defense plants or, more difficult yet, orange juice and mush—and endow them with poetic meaning). And one might continue with still other contrasts: the contrast of a kind of tough, vigorous manner of expression, crabbed and Anglo-Saxon, with one purely lyrical, graceful and smooth-flowing; of an almost contemptuously skeptical note with one of sincerest beliefs; or of the sharpest concentration on the here and now with the farthest leap of the imagination into the there and then.

It is just when he manages most successfully to resolve such contradictions, of course, that Lowell creates his best poems—and he manages it more often than one could have expected. The difficulty of managing that resolution is the measure of his achievement. Not many of his poetic contemporaries have attempted to resolve so many and such challenging contradictions. Not many, consequently, have been able to achieve quite such strength and richness.

There is one—and perhaps it is the most important—of these contradictions, however, which Lowell has not, I think, successfully resolved—and possibly because it may be irresolvable. This, of course, is the contradiction between his sense of reality, which is unusually acute, and his religious belief, which is unusually fervid. To many readers, who will accept with conviction his picture of the actual world—of Concord, for instance: "The Minute Man, the Irish Catholics,/The ruined bridge and Walden's fish-perch" — Lowell's effort to explain its significance by resort to religious dogma will seem an inevitably mistaken one. It will appear plainly impossible to them to answer in the affirmative the question he poses: "Crucifix,/How can your whited spindling arms transfix/Mammon's unbridled industry . . . ?" We have before us, of course, the example of another Catholic poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, who like Lowell was acutely sensitive to the actualities of experience—so sensitive, in fact, that (as he wrote to his friend Robert Bridges) he felt himself to be "in a manner . . . a Communist . . . it is a dreadful thing for the greatest and most necessary part of a very rich nation to live a hard life . . . England has grown hugely wealthy but this wealth has not reached the working classes. . . ."

But Hopkins was also a Jesuit priest. In the end, he was compelled to solve at his poetry's expense his dilemma: the dilemma of a man whose acceptance of otherworldly ideals compels him finally to deny what his own experience of the world and his fellow men has given him of love and understanding. Since Hopkins' time that dilemma has grown only very much sharper for anyone caught, as Lowell seems to be, within it. One can only hope that he will eventually find a solution less costly to his poetic development than Hopkins' solution.

WALTER MCELROY.

Typewriter KO's Champ

MY LIFE STORY, *by Joe Louis. Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* $2.75.

THE late Jack Blackburn, wise boxing strategist who was in Joe Louis' corner in most of his great fights, is mentioned often in this account. Joe has not been as lucky in his choice of literary seconds, Chester L Washington and Haskell Cohen, who shadow-box with an epic biographical subject and never lay a glove on it. *My Life Story* is a chronological paste-up of paragraphs from newspaper cuttings. As a list of what punches Joe threw at Godoy or Conn this work is an encyclopedia, but how many punches can you stand?

I wanted to know something about the remarkable young American whose sovereign career in and out of the prize ring has folk-legend dimensions among most of us, black and white. Joe Louis Barrow, the dignified man, is as well concealed in this "autobiography" as though his biographers were trying to write the life

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of Tom Dewey. Of his former managers, Roxborough and Black, less than nothing. Of Marva Louis and Mike Jacobs, zero. The "Life" is so discreet on the subject of who is presently managing the champion that the reader is left with the impression that Jack Blackburn is match-making from heaven instead of Mike Jacobs from the Twentieth Century Sporting Club.

The towel boys of the typewriter play sad Hollywood music as Joe gets into the ring for each bout. The fighter is successively inspired to win by his mother, his wife, his ailing trainer, and even by his infant child. These motivations are obviously true as far as the great-hearted champion is concerned, but I suspect that there are other interested parties in the house, such as Mike Jacobs, Madison Square Garden, the federal government, the New York state government and other intervening echelons between Joe Louis and the prize money. Nobody ever saw a movie fighter come up off the floor at the count of nine to win for the dear old Department of Internal Revenue, so I guess I am just against creative art.

Joe Louis is not a buckeye movie script, but a significant living American. There is a markedly better attempt to write the life in *Joe Louis, American* by Margery Miller. When it comes to writing about Joe Louis this little lady has the champ's literary handlers dancing down Queer Street.

DENNIS GOBBINS.

The Common Endeavor

SONS, *by V. A. Smirnov. Translated by Naomi Y. Yohel. Doubleday. $2.75.*

IN *Sons*, Smirnov tells the story of what happened to a small Russian village and the people in it during the two decades following the Revolution. Except for a few pages toward the end, the novel never goes beyond the borders of the village. But Smirnov is working with an ambitious theme. The remote little hamlet that was later to become the Common Endeavor Collective Farm was actually the Revolution in microcosm. Through this village, Smirnov shows the changes that took place in the thinking of the peasants as they slowly and painfully groped their way towards socialism.

The story is chiefly concerned with Anna, a backward, illiterate peasant woman who eventually becomes one of the leading workers on the farm.

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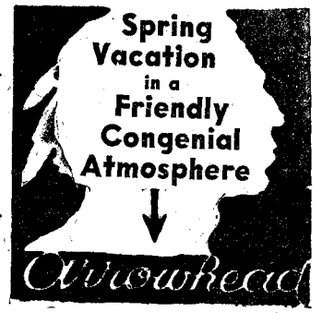

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Smirnov portrays her growth and the inner conflicts she has in breaking with the past. When Father Vassily, the well-fed village priest, warns her against having anything to do with the Bolsheviks, she is torn by doubt. "Lord Merciful," she whispers to herself fervidly, "give me guidance, simple foolish woman that I am . . . show me the light." Eventually, she does see the light, but the flashes are sometimes painful. The first time it occurs to her that Father Vassily might be lying she crosses herself, terror-stricken at her own thoughts. She resolves her conflicts simply, through day-to-day experience. Socialism gives her more land, a horse, a new house. It is better to work together than to work alone. Meanwhile she raises two sons who eventually join the Red Army.

As a picture of the period, the novel makes exciting reading. Smirnov shows the bleak, ingrown life of the village under czarism. He pictures the struggles against the kulaks, the resistance to new ways of doing things. He does not blink his eyes at the mistakes that were made. When Semyonov, the local Bolshevik leader, warns against admitting the kulaks into the collective farm, the peasants shout him down. But the farm somehow manages to survive its growing pains. The kulak plot to burn down the *kolkhoz* is discovered. The peasants, in their own time, learn that the new machinery doesn't have "devil's wheels," which will spoil the flax and cripple the workers. And eventually the farm becomes one of the best in the Soviet Union.

Smirnov gives you the feeling of rapid motion, of growth, during this period. He writes simply, full of a great deal of warmth and sympathy for the people he is dealing with. The main trouble with the novel, it seems to me, is that the characters and the story fall into what has by now become a standard pattern in the average Soviet novel. There is the sly kulak; the loyal, but untutored, Bolshevik; the crotchety, skeptical old peasant. As you read the novel you have the feeling that you have met them—in whole or in part—before. Smirnov does not add much in the way of new insight. Although Anna is filled out a good deal more than the other characters, she too lacks individuality. There is an easy inevitability about her development. Smirnov shows her doubts and conflicts, but these also have become conventionalized. In spite of these faults, however, *Sons* has an absorbing and important story to tell and should be read for its account of life on a Russian collective farm.

DAVID ARNOLD.

MUSIC

I HAVE to refer to Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All* as an opera, because to paraphrase Dr. Johnson, if it isn't an opera, what is it? As in an opera, people move about a stage in costume, and their words are set to music. But the form of opera has a history and inner and outer life which this work ignores.

Thomson's attitude toward form as a composer is consistent with his theories about form as a critic. Forgotten is the fact that musical forms, like all art forms, came into being because of the needs of new audiences, and because of revolutionary changes in the messages that entered music, the means of musical production, and the relations the composer wanted to build up with his hearers. Musical forms, to him, drop mysteriously from heaven. They are all mostly the same. A composer writes much the same kind of music for a symphony, a music drama, a serenade for three flutes and kettledrum. It is mostly a matter of mood. If he feels in an "editorializing" mood, he writes something like the Beethoven "Eroica." If he feels in a travelogue mood, he writes something like Smetana's set of tone poems, "My Country." If someone commissions him to set a religious text, he writes a mass. All that is needed is a slight bow toward the particular necessary but annoying formal conventions. He turns from one form to the other like a reporter doing Sunday newspaper features.

Stravinsky set his oratorio "Oedipus Rex" to Latin, so that he would not have to be bothered too much by the meaning of the words. Thomson did the next best thing by staying with the English language but having it written by Gertrude Stein. It is an interesting style of writing for opera, and in fact makes more sense when set to music than when read as a straight play. The words are not meaningless. She sets down a sentence with a clear meaning and then plays about with its separate words and phrases, in word-sound and rhythmic pattern. The result is very much like the baroque opera written by men like Handel and Rameau, for the eighteenth century aristocracy. There

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also words and phrases were repeated over and over to fit musical patterns. But such works had major musical compensations; Thomson offers only minor ones.

The theme is the life of Susan B. Anthony, the great battler for the emancipation of slaves and the emancipation of women. About her noble figure the play puts a flock of characters: man-hating women, woman-hating men, young lovers, politicians, tramps, generals, soldiers and statesmen. Upon all of them Susan beams sweetly and understandingly, while insisting upon her great "cause." What if they are full of prejudices, or baffled by things they do not understand, walking about like characters in a dream? Is not life a dream in which we choose the roles that fit us, and act them? Some pretty plain truths enter the play, for Gertrude Stein was a woman of sense. It says here and there that marriage should take place on a plane of equality, that ignorance is arrogant, that arrogance is the mask of fear, that the poor are more willing to learn than the rich. But these thoughts are projected with an air of gentle mockery, for in the cultivated world of Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson it is uncouth to take anything too seriously. Like many American artists of high accomplishments and taste, Thomson has a nostalgic love of the eighteenth century: a court player looking for a court and a servant's livery. But the case is a sad one, for the present-day rich patrons of art are pretty niggardly. And the art is far below the best of the eighteenth century. Its neo-classicisms lack the boldness, the scientific investigations of the craft, that made giants of Handel and Rameau; its satire lacks the sharpness that made Moliere and Voltaire telling political figures.

The music has the utmost charm. It is a fine synthesis of Americana, of spirituals, hymn tunes, Americanized Irish airs and German waltzes, Stephen Foster melodies, handled with the most delicate harmonic and orchestral economy and taste. Parts are completely captivating, like the marriage scene and the final hymn. It does the same sort of thing as *Oklahoma* on a far higher level of competence. In fact, it is as perfect as a Gilbert and Sullivan opus, a musical comedy written for the modern art connoisseur. (The excellent presentation was part of the Columbia University annual festival of American music.)

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THE smooth-shaven little man in the Spanish Consulate in London leaned over the counter. "And why do you want to go to Spain?" he said. "As a tourist," I replied. "Not as a journalist?" he said. "No." "Perhaps you have friends there? Who are they and where do they live? . . ." That's how Estelle Manning starts her articles on Franco Spain. She tells what she saw and heard in Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia. The Franco police trailed her but they could not stop her from getting one of the most important stories of the year. Again in the tradition of NM reportage from key centers of the world — this time from a terror-stricken and rebellious land — we tell the inside story.

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